Horațiu M. Trif-Boia

Logic and metaphysics in Hegel rethinkig the identity principle

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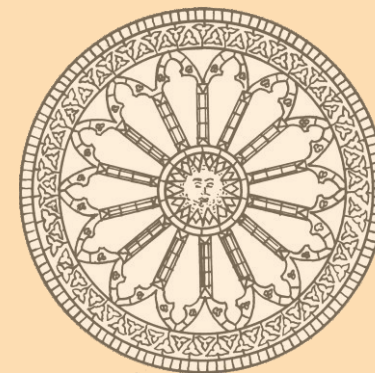# LOGIC AND METAPHYSICS IN HEGEL
RETHINKING THE IDENTITY PRINCIPLE

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RETHINKING THE IDENTITY PRINCIPLE

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Introduction

Being seized by an instance that brings the opening of its own transfixion, human spirit has always daunted the impossible. Thus, usually, any scientific work, and that of philosophy especially, aims at solving issues that are considered to have the merit of going beyond the present frontiers of history. But history is, at the same time, the medium or the ground where human spirit is nurtured or from which it takes its own urge to transcend it. Transcending history becomes, thus, the pure purpose of man, but history also is the scene where man must confront his own struggle and work for this goal of going beyond what is already given to him as immediate. Passing from immediate to mediation and then finding their mutual reflection into one another as a moment of unity—that is the scope of thinking or, ultimately, as the philosophical tradition has known it, "the identity of thought and being".

In the Western philosophical tradition, there is a long line of thinkers who have tried to express this immediate mediation, this coincidence between the opposites in various fashions. And each time the philosophical perspective has been hindered by the extreme difficulty of finding the right words capable to express what such a unity would entail. The difficulty occurs because the trial of this finding would unmistakably end by trying to get the words in themselves to be effectively the very unity that they are intending to suggest. Quite a difficult task, since this unity supposes the **transfixion of the thinking** *and* **of its language expression** in order to make them capable to participate to the very transcendence that they invoke.

This was a problem that was very sharply observed by G.W.F. Hegel. The German thinker developed an entire system around this issue, commencing

with the **Preface** to the *Phenomenology of the Spirit* where he considers the very important distinction between the ordinary proposition that finds its end in the predicate, thusly suppressing any possible transfiguration of the subject, and the speculative proposition which carries with the subject all the possible predicates of its essence, and ending with the **Concept** section of the *Science of Logic* where he considers the manner through which logic is to deal speculatively in order to avoid a thinking that is only formal, and, thus deprived of the richness of the real content experience that would result from its own form and would be coincident with it. But the problem of the spoken reference is that, before being put in language, all the elements of expression belong to the thought that formulates them and thus thinking is the expression of the essence of that which is intended by the subject. It is a truism that the reality of the intentions and the true object of the intention might not coincide. However, when Hegel speaks of the speculative proposition, he posits a horizon of realization and of efficacy where there is a boundless and absolute identity that pervades all differences because they are differences in themselves and, as such, differences are immediate modes of the actualization of the unbegun immediacy. Moreover, being called "the philosopher of the negative" not by mistake or caprice, what one finds in the very heart of the Hegelian system is the absolute coincidence between one and the other, between absolute identity and absolute difference, absolute affirmation and absolute negation etc.. In this, if Hegelian thought is correct, we would have the perfect intelligible and effective instrument of transfiguring any thought and of bypassing almost any type of limit.

In this respect the present work has undertaken the burden of a short research in the configuration and occurrence of one of the most basic aspects of the Hegelian system: his ground postulates and fundamental developments of the concept of identity. In this endeavor, we approached Hegel's *Science of Logic* where we were concerned with the author's treatment of this concept. We found that the concept of identity that is presented in

the 2nd part of the work, **Essence**, is already determined in its fundamental articulations in relation to what the author discusses in the opening of the 1st part, **Being**.

However, we opened our analysis with the treatment concerning Hegel's speculative methodology since it is a systematic prerequisite for any discussion of his thinking. All the state-of-the-art literature affirms this as the correct position concerning the relation between subject, object their articulation within thought and its expression in language. As Stanislas Opiela has shown (Opiela, 1983), among other commentators, the method is not a canvas that is externally applied to the content of the speculative enterprise. But it is the resultant of the immediate-mediated content that appears with the first considerations that are made about subject and object. Because speculative appraisal of a fundamental relation begins from zero premises, thus concerning all prior elements or frames of actualization that would usually be supposed, all suppositions are already terminated by a process that turns, then, against itself in the reflection of the antinomy that such terminality supposes and in this manner the object of the appraisal becomes its method and it immediately reveals itself being coincidental with the subject that is delivering it.

This methodological approach committed us to employ any analysis from the speculative standpoint, owing loyalty once more to Hegel's dictum that any estimation of one's ideas needs to let be developed and judged from their own standpoint and let be manifest in their own terms, thus any refutation could be seized in the terms of the system that is under investigation. But when we set about this endeavor we found that we should, first, deploy a few checks upon what Heidegger accused as being "die onto-theologische Verfassung der Metaphysik"—in other words, his roundabout criticism to the fundamental premise of the identity principle in Western thought. Of course, given the limitations of our scope and time resources, we could not adventure at great length into such analysis, but we limited ourselves to

the main lines of criticism that are concentrated in *Der Satz der Identität* (Heidegger, 1969 [1957], pp. 21-41; Heidegger, 2006 [1957], pp. 31-50), seminal text that exposes in a distilled view the Heideggerian position towards the foundational premise of the Western thought. In this, we observed the fundamental difference between the Heideggerian and Hegelian approaches towards the identity principle which oriented further our work into the question of the metaphysical, ontological and logical assumptions that are prerequisite for a deep understanding of Hegel's position: the result of the comparative view of the two authors revealed that the identity issue in Hegel is entirely determined by the concept of immediacy and that of negation or of its primary occurrence which is difference. (Ahlers, 1975, p. 266) Thus, after a short preliminary concerning the speculative method, we plunged in a metaphysical exposition of the inquiry that we set out for an extensive analysis of the issue of immediacy as metaphysical origin in the entire B. section of our work. In the chapters that we developed in this direction we found that what Hegel was envisioning as the metaphysical origin or as immediacy may be expressed as **Absolute Indeterminate Immediacy** which is our formulation for the "*unsagbar*" (Rohs, 1972, p. 58) that Hegel postulates as the originary unity and difference of *Being* and *Nothing*.

In the last section of our work, we tried to discuss a few implications that may be derived from this result such as: the issue of the ontological *Beginning*, of the Hegelian *Becoming*, that of the Hegelian reformation of the identity principle and the issue of the opening of the Hegelian *Being* to *Essence*. In the final subchapter we formulated the most crucial Hegelian urge of his system that is, in fact, the fundamental tenet that he indefatigably followed throughout all his developments and which was at the same time a direct consequence of his vision expressed in his continuous and arduous passing from immediacy, through mediation, to the unity of immediacy and mediation: the *urge of freedom*.

In what follows we present a few aspects that concern our scientifical research in this work and the sources that we used.

Most durable scientific difficulties rose from the limits of knowledge. These limits are in close relation with paradoxes and contradictions, some of them being conceptual, others experimental. They were recorded as: „the limit of what can be expressed; the limit of what can be described or conceived; the limit of what can be known; the limit of iteration of some operation or other, the infinite in its mathematical sense". (Priest, 1995) In this perspective, the Hegelian project gained tremendous significance in the past 100 years and continues to amass interest to this day (Cassirer, 1950; Merleau-Ponty, 1964; Cohen & Wartofsky, 1984; Priest, 1995; Hyppolite, 1997; Taylor, 2000; Beiser, 2005). Explored for concerns of philosophy of socio-politics, his work has come to paradigmatically dominate large portions not only of humanities (History, Politics, Sociology, Cultural Studies, Economics, Literature Theory, Linguistics), but also grew a concern for Educational Sciences, Aesthetics, Theology (Brito, 1979; Brito, 1983; Labarriere, 1986; Danto, 1998; König, 1999; Vieillard-Baron, 2006) and the foundations of Logic and Mathematics (Biard, et al., 1981; Kol'man & Yanovskaya, 1983 [1931, 1968]; Alcouffe, 1985; Pinkard, 1988; Priest, 1995; Lacroix, 2000). Ultimately, he became a central point of debate among analytic philosophers (Brandom, 2000; Brandom, 2002; Redding, 2007). Hegelianism was again reconsidered after the XXth century (re)discoveries of paradoxes and foundational contradictions that bewildered the human intellect. The increased interest in the Hegelian philosophy stems from its speculative core that aims overcoming the laws of formal logic especially the law of contradiction by overcoming the opposition of subject and object in the effectiveness of the Absolute Spirit. Thus, Hegelian philosophy is one of the most decisive and astonishing answers that philosophy gave to an understanding forbidden by paradoxes and contradictions. Hegel is unhesitatingly affirming that the solution to paradoxes and contradictions lies within the paradoxes and

contradictions themselves if understood with the correct, i.e. speculative, way of reasoning (Hyppolite, 1946 I, pp. 133-134).

But whilst the phenomenological, political and social features of the Hegelian thought have been in prominence since the times of Hegel himself, the Hegelian logic in its effective overcoming of formal logic has been less visited and analyzed in all its aspects, mostly making for the object analysis of a few specialists (Pippin, 1978, pp. 301-302). In this respect, the relation of Hegelian fundamental concepts to the institution of Hegelian speculative beginning, though examined extensively, the accent was weaker concerning the Identity principle. As known, Hegel's logic is the backbone of his system. As Rolf Ahlers points out (Ahlers, 1975), Identity is a nuclear element for immediate beginning of thought in its ontological relation to *Being*, *Nothing* and *Becoming*, as initial elements of the Hegelian development, and then to the establishment of the Essence in order, lastly, to rest in the *Absolute Knowing* of the *Spirit* and the *Absolute Idea*.

The Hegelian logic is also the most controversial point of debate, since Hegel himself assigns it a speculative dimension to make use of contradiction as a conceptual and ontological solution for true knowledge (Hyppolite, 1946 I, pp. 130-131), also presenting his system as a system of identity. Its aim and result are no more or less than *the Identity of thought and being*. In this respect, Hegel's enterprise has made the object of innumerable analysis. But the main issues and categories that were dealt with have been mostly the political, theological and phenomenological ones (in Continental philosophy), while the theo-onto-logical ones, though addressed in many works, have been developed in a rather specific than intensive manner. More acutely, the point of the debate in Hegelian logic begins with overcoming the law of contradiction which implies overcoming the separation of subject and object and thought and being, respectively. Through this overcoming of pairs the spirit discovers an *Identity* which is not only logical (speculatively, not formally), but ontological, too. Our work found that Hegelian *Identity*

and *Being* are intimately related in that which Hegel shows as unfolding within *Absolute*. (Ahlers, 1975, p. 272) And, more important, that immediate *Being* has the same conceptual root with that of *Identity*.

Any possible overcoming of contradiction is dependent on our concept of *Identity* and, not least, on conceptualizing *Being*. The difficulty that is to be dealt here is to unravel the Hegelian fundamental concept of *Identity* and of *Being* in their mutual relation and supposition, as well as their unfolding of *Difference*—element which brings the negative that allows for the ontological development to thrive. In this endeavor we shall also shortly deal with one more point of contention: the critique that Schelling addressed to Hegelian philosophy since his Berlin years—that Hegel didn't find any point of irreducibility in the initiation of the speculative enterprise, accusing Hegel that his position is damned to unrest in the eternal process of the speculative negative movement. This accusation departed from Schelling's philosophical position which calls for an intuitive, irreducible and absolute Unconditional which drove to „Schelling's condemnation of Hegel's system for being a merely negative philosophy unconcerned with reality" (Lauer, 2010, p. 6)—a critique that aims precisely at the present's project concern, though from a different perspective than that of logic. This is what also inspired Kierkegaard's critique and it was perpetuated in the XXth century as well in the works of M. Heidegger, M. Richir or H. Maldiney. On this the Hegelian position is supported by some of the theological and religious critiques' constructive and important elucidations, some of which we had the privilege to reference in our present work (J.-L. Vieillard-Baron, Emilio Brito, David König, Ernst Benz, Dale Schlitt, Cyril O'Regan, James Yerkes, Wolfhart Pannenberg, Michael Theunissen, Jörg Splett, Erik Schmidt, Bruno Puntel etc.).

Concerning Hegelian proper logical aspects in general and the laws of thought in the Hegelian texts, the studies, though many, are far lesser in number. Especially the nuclear point of departure of the Science of Logic's theme either of *Identity of Being and Nothing* and their passing into *Becoming*,

either of the relation of this theme with immediate or absolute *Identity* is almost every time treated unsatisfactorily or in an incomplete or scant manner that mostly fails to fathom the abysmal depth of the Hegelian vision on immediacy. Since Hegel himself assigns to speculative reason the position of Spirit's knowledge that would be able to overcome through *Aufhebung*, *Verkehrung*, *Wechsellung* and *Übergehen* the determinateness of being to its effective *Absolute Totality*, this speculative turn's ground appears as the focal point of every meaningful analysis. Up to present, most of these analyses, with the notable exception of the late Heidegger, treated almost exclusively about the negative or the *Difference* in the Hegelian system and emphasized only the contradictory departure of the Hegelian speculative turn (Hyppolite, 1946 I; Hyppolite, 1997; D'Hondt, 1987 [1966]). The latest analyses of the Hegelian logical premises concerning solutions in polyvalent logics have dealt only with the premises of the contradiction as a solution for non-binary logics, and even in this respect their endeavor is somewhat confusing when dealing with the distinction between exclusive and non-exclusive logical opposition (Priest, 1995). The few scholarly papers that also focused on the law of Identity (Siemens, 1988; Grier, 2007; Georgescu, 2014) fail to encompass the entire ontological and metaphysical extent of the issue and either do not link the issue of the law of Identity to the fundamental Hegelian premise of the *Identity between Being and Nothing*, either do not proceed in any way to such a meaningful analysis, limiting themselves only to a logical criticism of the Hegelian overcoming of formal logic pretending that it is logically ineffective (Siemens, 1988); either limit themselves only to a strictly reflected position on the issue of the ontological implications of the Hegelian approach of the principle (Georgescu, 2009; Georgescu, 2014); either limit themselves to the analysis of social implications (Grier, 2007). The few works where such relation is recorded, but without further deepening, are in the French, Anglo-American and German scholar literature (J. Biard, D. Buvat, J.-F. Kervegan, Louis Girard, André Léonard, Andre Doz, Stanislas Opiela, Bernard Mabille, Christopher Lauer, Miklos Vetö, Dale Schlitt etc.).

In one of the most important and extensive works on the subject of Hegelian philosophy (Biard, J., Buvat, D, Kervegan, J.-F. & all: 1981-1983-1987, 3 vols.), the authors have a very emphatic and decided position on the matter of the originary *Difference*. They interpret the Hegelian position as having fundamentally rejected every possibility of establishing an onto-logical *Difference*, for example. Unilaterally considering Hegel's own position concerning the effectiveness of *Being* and *Nothing* in themselves.

On the other hand, A. Léonard's work (1974) does precisely what its title announces: a literal commentary, but on the „Lesser Logic" (Hegel's first volume of the *Encyclopedia*). Concerning the matter of the Identity, we find in Léonard's text the same lack of exhaustion of the matter of the law of Identity and of a comprehensive and satisfactorily development of this concept's relations to the matter of the *Beginning*, the antecedence of *Being/Nothing*, the presupposition of the speculation's contradictory method etc..

In the Romanian literature we have even less numerous studies concerning Hegel in general and our topic in particular. D.D. Roșca's studies regarding the Hegelian relation with the thought of H. Taine (Roșca, 1968 [1928]) and the book *The Tragic Existence* (*Existența tragică*) (Roșca, 1934) have just elementary considerations regarding our issue; then, in C.I. Gulian's works on the Hegelian system, as in his *Hegel* for example (Gulian, 1981) we find, unfortunately, only Marxist-Materialist views which massively distort the Hegelian thought situating it within the difference between subject and object and emphasizing irrelevant and fruitless socio-historical premises. Recently seminal work has been done by Romanian researchers, the most relevant being that of Ș.D. Georgescu (Georgescu, 2009; Georgescu, 2010; Georgescu, 2014; Georgescu, 2014). Treating about Absolute Idea and truth in Hegel, negation, contradiction and positivity of negation, and also about the relation between the formal principle of Identity and the speculative one, Georgescu shows the *Being's* initial evanescent void indeterminacy. But *Being's* role does not end with this nullification which has premises that

Georgescu didn't address. Moreover, Georgescu doesn't address either at all, either satisfactorily significant issues such as: the *Identity's* absolute articulation in the **Essence** section, the instantiation of *Identity* as pure immediacy and pure initial self-division, the contradiction exhaustive relation to immediate *Being* and *Identity*. Also, Georgescu uses the distinction between identity and predication as outlined by B. Russell (see also Siemens, 1988), but this distinction is inoperative in Hegelian speculative *Identity* just as the sphere and content of notions which do not exist at this level. He addresses the mutual Hegelian superposition of *Being* and *Nothing*, but without revealing *Difference's* origin. The contradiction of the speculative passing of *Being* and *Nothing* is unclear, since Hegelian contradiction is viewed as only transitory, not systematic.

The only work that we know of having treated the subject of the origin of Identity and Difference extensively operates only within the **Essence** section of the *Science of Logic*. We name here Pilippe Soual's work (Soual, 2000) where we find a discussion of the Hegel's chapter on the Identity principle. In many respects, Soual's work formulates points of view that serve our research. But his approach is not exhaustive and does not insist sufficiently on the relation between originary *Identity of Being and Nothing*, the principle of *Identity* and the principle of contradiction the concepts of which are not clarified in contrast with formal logic. For example he does not treat either at all, either satisfactorily the regime of the logical impossibility and its immediacy, the issue of the regime of the absolute antecedence of *Being* and/or *Nothing*, the relation of the absolute beginning with the laws of logic, the subsequent relation between abstract *Identity* and speculative *Identity* etc..

Moreover, Soual does not deal with what late Professor Bernard Mabille has consecrated in the Hegelian literature as the "litigation" between Hegel and Heidegger concerning Heidegger's onto-theological accusations against Hegel (Mabille, 2004). Since the work of Professor Mabille has already dealt

with this contentious issue and, in our opinion, has brought quite important and decisive clarifications, our enterprise has endeavored to make assessments, in what follows, on the issue of the tacit dispute of the idea of identity, and, more precisely, the question of the spring of identity and of its treatment both in Heidegger and Hegel.

Another paper also has gone to the core of the Hegelian speculative endeavor: Rolf Ahlers *The Absolute as the Beginning of Hegel's Logic* (Ahlers, 1975). The author has understood with great subtlety that the entire speculative system rests upon the issue of the speculative identity between Being and Nothing and that this is the nuclear point of initiation of the exhibition of the Absolute. Ahlers also analyzes in good speculative detail the relation between the **Doctrine of Being** section and that of the **Essence** section of the *Science of Logic*, as he explains with great insight how the beginning of the Logic cannot depart from Reflection and how "undetermined immediacy" is the point of coincidence between the absolute identity and absolute difference or the pure aperture of the immediacy within its own immediation. These insights proved to be very fruitful for our present work. However, Ahlers does not mention which is the conceptual canon of the "undetermined immediacy", what is the speculative condition for its revelation and he does not see the transcendent condition of the "inconceivable" beginning from the speculative dialectic of Being and Nothing into Becoming.

In the end, we found ourselves compelled to make some referential amendments after the completion of our work when we found an author that discussed the main concept of our nuclear considerations concerning Hegelian identity: the concept of *unsagbar*, "unsayable" difference between Being and Nothing. Peter Rohs, in his *Form und Grund* (Rohs, 1972) proved to be probably the only author who, before us, noticed the seminal and tacit significance and implications of the immediate and ineffable difference between Being and Nothing and he also remarked, before Rolf Ahlers, that the *unsagbar Unterschied* of Being and Nothing has its correspondence in

the *Unbegreiflichkeit des Anfangs* of the dialectic through Becoming. Rohs has the acumen to apprehend the non-dialectical form of difference between Being and Nothing, in other words, its transcendence—but he does not mention such assessment. He also correctly perceives that it is about the principle of absolute difference as an answer to the Eleatic argument against it. He also shows great insight when he situates the issue of the *unsagbar* in the same spectrum as the Kantian *Ding an Sich*, which would have had to open the metaphysical horizon of theology. But Rohs does not assume such development in his text. He also correctly sees the implications of the *unsagbar* at the level of the Reflection of Essence. The immediacy as expressed in the *unsagbar* is the Nothing that is brought about by the positing reflection; but this reflection has no relation to something other, it has no outside; thus, it is pure and absolute immediately reflected negation of itself without relation. With this, Peter Rohs has also touched with the exposition of the **Absolute Indeterminate Immediacy** as we conceived it in our work. But, besides the fact that he did not clarify any of the aspects mentioned above, his incursion in the Hegelian *unsagbar* fragment also misses another important point: its relation to *identity*. In Rohs text the link between the difference and the identity of the *unsayable* are not presented, he remains loyal to the concept's circumscription as mere difference, as initially established by Hegel.

The fate of logic as academic discipline and as philosophical foundation is deplored by both Hegel and Heidegger. If in the *Science of Logic* introductory word (first **Preface** of 1812) Hegel finds that during his own time logic has become merely a scholastic development of self-edifying formal exposure, the same conclusion is drawn by Heidegger himself in the introductory considerations of his *Metaphysical Foundations of Logic* (first published in 1928). If the previous thinker finds that logic needs to be renewed afresh with proper speculative care that can attain the fitting of holding an infinite truth (second **Preface** of 1831), the latter also thinks that logic needs to become philosophical again, breaking off with the directions that logic had

acquired and which had completely estranged logic and philosophy, if not compromised the idea of logic entirely. Both thinkers entertain the undertaking of reforming the "common sense" of the formal logic as defined by the principles of thought as formally and univocally understood: A is only A and A is not non-A. (Hegel, 2010 [1832], p. 18; Heidegger, 1984 [1978], p. 5)

But the solution that either finds can be posited in a speculated position to the other: where Heidegger deplores the analogical and rational kernel that appropriates meaning and estranges Western thought from the path of the Ancients who discussed identity in a mystagogical frame of contemplation, Hegel finds meaningful the use of the intellect as long as it is taken beyond the sterile mono-tautologies of the formal logic and accepts the speculative method. It is our argument here that our present work is presenting here the pivotal point of the Hegelian speculative thought, the key movement of what makes unbegun beginning to the movements and figures of the Hegelian exposition which has further revealed itself under the frame that made possible for Hegel to ascertain that in the movements of the Spirit the essential occurs as *Aufheben*.

We leave it to the kind judgment of the reader to confirm if our assessment has been achieved or not.

A. Hegelian Onto-Theo-Logy and Heidegger's Ontological Difference Problem

I. Heideggerian identity

The word and the deed

From the first pages of his *Die ontotheologische Verfassung der Metaphysik*,[1] Heidegger is accentuating that his goal is the opening of a horizon through which thinking should find its authenticity by aiming at the thinking of the Ontological Difference (Mabille, 2004, pp. 74-75). The *Schritt zurück* (Heidegger, 1969 [1957], pp. 49-50; Heidegger, 2006 [1957], pp. 58-59), the "step back", that he is inviting to be taken in order to grasp that which has not yet been grasped and that which has not been thought yet, is precisely the act of opening the above spoken horizon.

But the concrete significance of the opening of this horizon is revealed by Heidegger through his answer to the first question by which he engages Hegel in *Die ontotheologische Verfassung der Metaphysik*:

> For us, the matter of thinking is the Same, and thus is Being—but Being with respect to its difference from beings. Put more precisely: for Hegel, the matter of thinking is the idea as the absolute concept. For us, formulated in a preliminary fashion, the matter of thinking is the difference as difference. (Heidegger, 1969 [1957], p. 47; Heidegger, 2006 [1957], p. 56)

In other words, that which Heidegger is precisely pointing to in this fragment, as his intended difference towards the Hegelian system, is his

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[1] We are hereby using the *Identity and Difference* English 1969 translation text which, as it is known, has referred itself to the 1957 edition by Günther Neske Verlag in Pfullingen. However, any German citation within our work will take in account the 2006 edition of *Band 11* of the *Gesamtausgabe*, Vittorio Klostermann edition (Heidegger, 2006 [1957]).

discussion of the pure Being and of the pure difference, that which he calls as "ontological difference between Being and beings", a concept that he forged thirty years earlier in his *Metaphysische Anfangsgründe der Logik im Ausgang von Leibniz* (Heidegger, 1978 [1928], p. 193; Heidegger, 1984 [1978], p. 152; Dahlstrom, 2020, p. 54):

> Sein ist überhaupt und in jeder Bedeutung Sein von Seiendem. Sein ist vom Seienden unterschieden – und überhaupt nur dieser Unterschied, diese Unterschiedsmöglichkeit gewährt ein Verstehen von Sein. Anders gewendet: im Verstehen von Sein liegt das Vollziehen dieses Unterscheidens von Sein und Seiendem. Dieser Unterschied ist es, der allererst so etwas wie Ontologie ermöglicht. Daher nennen wir diesen so etwas wie Seinsverständnis erst ermöglichenden Unterschied die *ontologische Differenz*.[2]

Thus formulated, Heidegger's thesis should be the basic pretension and opening for the ultimate metaphysics. For a theologian, this should be a clear invitation to begin speaking about the ultimate Principle of existence, the Being as Being in its own absolute Difference towards beings.

However, that is not what Heidegger is really doing, at least not in this text.[3]

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[2] In the English version:

Being is, as such and in its every meaning, the being of beings. Being is different than beings, and only this difference in general, this possibility of distinction, insures an understanding-of-being. Put another way, in the understanding-of-being this distinction of being from beings is carried out. It is this distinction that makes anything like an ontology possible in the first place. We thus term this distinction that first enables something like an understanding-of-being the *ontological difference*.

[3] His meditations about Being in itself and in general are dedicated, as is known, to the pages of his *Introduction to Metaphysics* (Heidegger, 2000 [1953]) and his first assessment of the "ontologische Differenz" appears in his *Metaphysical Foundations of Logic* (Heidegger, 1978 [1928], p. 193; Heidegger, 1984 [1978], p. 152), German edition (V. Klostermann) GA 26.

Identity as Principle

Illuminating in this endeavor is the other text that the author has chosen to publish together with *Verfassung der Metaphysik*, but immediately prior: *The Principle of Identity/Der Satz der Identität* (Heidegger, 1969 [1957], pp. 21-41; Heidegger, 2006 [1957], pp. 31-50).

In this other text Heidegger takes into account the issue of the principle of identity and points out that, despite the Western philosophical Tradition that has always understood the concept of identity as unity of the same (Heidegger, 1969 [1957], pp. 23-25; Heidegger, 2006 [1957], pp. 33-34), the Parmenidean expression of this identity has to be grasped in a different fashion (Heidegger, 1969 [1957], pp. 27-28; Heidegger, 2006 [1957], pp. 36-37). The Western Tradition of thought has always considered Being as the primary instance or element that is to be thought as the beginning of any existential structure, establishing the sense of everything that is on the premise of ontological foundation. Thus, the entire structure of existence would begin with the pure Being and every predication that would be pronounced concerning the origin of existence would be originary attributable to this originary instance. The predicate of identity would be thought as a property or an attribute of the pure and originary Being.

With Parmenides the expression that describes the origin of the concept of identity should be understood the other way around: τό γαρ αυτό νοεῖν ἐστίν τε και εἶναι—"For the same perceiving (thinking) as well as being"[4]—would have to mean that Identity is the primary instance that

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[4] Joan Stambaugh's translation in English (Heidegger, 1969 [1957], p. 27). Heidegger's translation in German: "Das Selbe nämlich ist Vernehmen (Denken) sowohl als auch Sein." (Heidegger, 2006 [1957], p. 36) Other English translations: "for the same thing is for conceiving as is for being" (Coxon, 2009 [1986], p. 58); "for it is the same thing to think and to be", "for to think and to be are the same", "for the same thing is there to think (of) and to be" (Palmer, 2009, p. 119); or, "for the same thing is (there) for understanding and for being" (Palmer, 2009, p. 365).

organizes the significance of the concept of Being, and, thusly, is to be understood as the real origin and the horizon that commands the relation between Being and Thinking. While the Western Tradition meant to situate Thinking only as the revelation of Being given in another mode of the Same which would be the Being, Heidegger's new perspective puts Being and Thinking on a pair only to manifest them as two correspondent elements by the virtue that is offered and assured for them by a third, their horizon of possibility and of relation that comprehends them both: the horizon of the Same. Therefore, Heidegger's change of position claims to go beyond the ground instance of Being and the manifest instance of Thinking, discovering the Sameness above them. Thus, the predicate of the Same is not a predicate subordinate to Being anymore, but the other way around: Being is an occurrence of the Same together with Thinking. Thus, Being and Thinking are the same in the sense that they belong together to this fundamental origin of all that is given—the Same as the horizon of fundamental identity:

> We must acknowledge the fact that in the earliest period of thinking, long before thinking had arrived at a principle of identity, identity itself speaks out in a pronouncement which rules as follows: thinking and Being belong together in the Same and by virtue of this Same.

> Unintentionally we have here already interpreted τό αυτό, the Same. We interpret Sameness to mean a belonging together (*Zusammengehörigkeit*)[5]. The obvious thing to do would be to represent this belonging together in the sense of identity as it was thought and generally understood later on. What could prevent us? None other than the principle itself which we read in Parmenides. For it says something else—it says that Being, together with thinking, belongs in the Same. Being is determined by an identity as a characteristic of that identity. Later on, however,

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[5] Our insertion of the German term.

identity as it is thought of in metaphysics is represented as a characteristic of Being. Thus we must not try to determine the identity that Parmenides speaks of in terms of this metaphysically represented identity.

The Sameness of thinking and Being that speaks in Parmenides' fragment *stems from further back*[6] than the kind of identity defined by metaphysics in terms of Being as a characteristic of Being. (Heidegger, 1969 [1957], pp. 27-28; Heidegger, 2006 [1957], pp. 36-37)

What passes as unspoken in Heidegger's formulations here quoted is what appears to have been the most important source for the concept of *Zusammengehörigkeit*: the ancient texts of Plato and Aristotle. As a clear reference for this inspiration is the conference that Heidegger held in 1928 in Marburg over the metaphysical foundations of logic with special reference to the metaphysics of Rationalism in general and the system of Leibniz in particular: his *Metaphysische Anfangsgründe Der Logik im Ausgang von Leibniz* of which consists the 26th volume of his Gesamtausgabe.[7] There we may find first that Heidegger already considered the issue of the relation between being and thought as the point of reference of the issue of the foundation or of the ground of truth which makes it, then, a principal and prerequisite issue in finding the origin of *Zusammengehörigkeit*:

In measuring itself up to that about which it thinks, true thinking seeks in the being itself that on which it supports and grounds itself. All true thinking finds grounds and has definite possibilities of grounding. There is thus the further question, How is it that the truth of thinking and thinking itself must have something like a *ground*—and can have a ground?

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6 Our emphasis.

7 Published by Vittorio Klostermann in 1978. The English edition is published by Indiana University Press in 1984.

[...]

To think, we said, is to determine, *determinare*; in its simplest form: determining something as something,—"as" something: as such-and-such. The question is, What does this "as something" imply, this reference to another from which something given is supposed to be determined? To what extent is there presupposed here the basic form of that kind of grasping we call conceiving and the *concept*?

[...]

And finally, determinative thinking, as thinking about beings, brings, in its own way, the being of beings to expression. The simple statement "A *is* b" shows this in the most rudimentary way. The "is," nevertheless, need not be expressed in language. It is also contained in such statements as "the car goes," "it rains" (*pluit*). The "to be" that appears expressly in the sentence is termed the *copula*. The fact that determinative thinking is, in its basic form, tied directly to the "is," to being, indicates that there must be a special connection between thought and being-not to mention that thinking itself is a being and as such is directed toward beings. (Heidegger, 1984 [1978], pp. 20-21)

Thus, issues such as "ground, concept, lawfulness, and freedom" the metaphysical foundations of logic must be investigated. (Heidegger, 1984 [1978], p. 21) Leaving aside any intention of comprehensively treating the entire history of logic, from Plato to Husserl, in order to ascertain the proper answers that have been formulated by other thinkers, Heidegger understands to focus his attention on one author alone whose system could be considered as a point of convergence between ancient and medieval logic and a stimulus "for posing new questions, providing suggestions for tasks which are in part taken up only in recent times": Leibniz. (Heidegger, 1984 [1978], p. 22) In Leibniz Heidegger identifies the moment of the development of the new paradigm of the issue of the ground of thinking and the rationalist philosopher

opens Heidegger's first analysis concerning the matter of identity or unity: in his first considerations concerning what the object of logic is, he considers Aristotle's treatment of the idea of "logos" (λόγοσ) as expressed in his Περὶ Ἑρμηνείας (De interpretatione, 4, 16b, 26) (Heidegger, 1978 [1928], pp. 28-29; Heidegger, 1984 [1978], pp. 22-23) where the statement as such is treated as being either:

1. a separate term or as "something" (*als ein bloßes Sagen von etwas*) which in Greek is expressed by the simple φάσις (mere individual saying of a notion with no intention, the example given by both the old Greek and the modern German being "man", simply said with no other adjoining word or expression),

2. a positive assertion (*Zu-sage*) which in Greek is expressed by the notion of κατάφασις, where Heidegger explains that the prefix "κατά-" means "from above down toward something" (a constructed sentence with subject and predicate, the example given by the modern German being "the man there is excited", "*der Mensch dort ist erregt*", thus it is the propositional relation in which the initial notion of "man" from the mentioned example gets engaged),

3. a negative assertion or rejection (*Ab-sage*) which in Greek is expressed by the notion of ἀπόφασις, when one would want to say that the initial notion, "man", does not exist.

And immediately following these considerations Heidegger delivers the important conclusion:

> Every proposition, as a determination of something as something, is accordingly either an affirmation or denial. These expressions are to be taken quite literally. To affirm means to assert something as belonging-to, and to deny means to reject something as not belonging-to. (Heidegger, 1984 [1978], p. 23)

> / Jede Aussage als Bestimmen von etwas als etwas ist demnach entweder eine Zu-sage oder eine Ab-sage; diese Ausdrücke sind ganz wörtlich zu nehmen: Zu-sage bedeutet Zusprechen als zugehörig, Ab-sage Absprechen als nicht zugehörig. / (Heidegger, 1978 [1928], p. 29)

In this place of the Heideggerian text we find, thus, the primary clue of Heidegger's *Zusammengehörigkeit* concept later used in his seminal text *Identity and Difference* as designating the spring of the original identity principle. "Belonging-to" (*zugehörig*) and "not belonging-to" (*nicht zugehörig*) are the situations that may be found about any object of thinking when the truth or the falsity of that object is assessed; intention that is displayed through the fundamental *affirmation* (κατάφασις) or *negation* (άπόφασις) concerning that object. Thus, it is in the originary unity of the statement or of the proposition that λόγος reveals itself as an original unity (*eine ursprüngliche Einheit*) because:

> Logos is not the sum or aggregate of two notions. But what provides unity (*Einheit gibt*)[8] is ultimately just what is essential in thinking, in νοεῖν and διανοεῖν. Secondly, only this unity can really be true or false. It is thus the bearer of that feature which characterizes knowledge as such. (Heidegger, 1978 [1928], p. 36; Heidegger, 1984 [1978], p. 24)

This unity is then analyzed by Heidegger in Leibniz's work on the logic of the principles, the truth, the concept, the ground and the freedom. In this, the seminal principle that is found is that of the relation of intelligibility between thought and being, a relation that Heidegger identifies in Leibniz's postulate:

> *Cum Deus calculat et cogitationem exercet, fit mundus*. "When God calculates (with visible signs) and converts his thinking into deed, the world arises." (Heidegger, 1984 [1978], p. 28)

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8   Our addition.

Which implies, evidently, that one must first understand thinking in order to proceed from its principle, the essence of thinking, which decides what belongs to it (*was zu einem Gedachten überhaupt gehört*) and what it does not. Once this problem illuminated, it should be revealed that the essence of thinking goes on a path directly to the essence of being (*vom Wesen des Denkens zum Wesen des Seins*), "from logic, to ontology". But one may immediately observe that the inverse situation (*umgekehrt*) is also correct: logic would be grounded on the already presumed ontology—and this seems to be the case with Leibniz, Heidegger argues. Although, his position considering the epistemological decision between the primacy of the two disciplines is not determined in favor of one discipline against the other.[9] In fact, Heidegger says, the primacy of one discipline or of the other should be decided by the facts themselves—a clarity that is lacking even in the matter of the logical judgment itself: defined as a relationship between at least two concepts, as Kant also remarked, it is not clear at all in what this relationship consists (*worin dieses Verhältnis bestehe*). (Heidegger, 1984 [1978], p. 30) The relationship is, of course, that between a something that expresses about something, meaning that of the predicate which determines the underlying subject. But this also must be clarified in many ways: what are the meanings that the subject and the predicate must be contained to (physical, mental, ontological, logical); but the most important task is how does the predicate pertain to the subject, how is it contained or included in the concept of the subject? This relationship needs, therefore, a treatment of the concept of *inclusion* (*inesse*) which takes us to the matter of being itself (*esse*). (Heidegger, 1984 [1978], p. 31) This matter is what decides when and why the predicate pertains or is included in the subject and how:

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9   In Heidegger's own words:

> The relationship between disciplines must be decided from the problems and subject-matters themselves; disciplines should not be regarded as fixed territories. It may well be the case in both disciplines that the territories are not adequately defined. (Heidegger, 1984 [1978], p. 28)

Leibniz's criterion, as quoted by Heidegger, is that when this does not happen analytically, it should happen at least virtually in such a way that when one encounters the subject, one would easily decide if the predicate can belong to it or not (...*wenn wir von einem Prädikat sagen, daß es einem bestimmten Subjekt wahrhaft zugehört; ...daß das Prädikat ihm zugehört*). (Heidegger, 1978 [1928], p. 40; Heidegger, 1984 [1978], p. 31) The ultimate criterion, as Heidegger observes, has already been decided by Aristotle who established in *Categories*, 5, 2a, 11 that the fundamental subject of a judgment is only that who is not attributed to any other, meaning that it is not included as property in any other notion, it does not belong to another notion. That sort of a subject is called "individual substance" or Monad by Leibniz wherein Aristotle's expression for it is the famous Ούσία or πρώτη ούσία (the τόδε τι), *the substance*. And here Heidegger remarks:

> By ούσία (substance) Aristotle understands that which is independently *present*, independent *presence*. [**our emphasis**] (Heidegger, 1984 [1978], p. 32)

> / Aristoteles versteht unter ούσία (Substanz) das eigenständig *Anwesende*, die eigenständige *Anwesenheit*. / [**our emphasis**] (Heidegger, 1978 [1928], p. 41)

The fundamental subject, thus, is fundamental presence (*Anwesenheit*) or substance as individual presence (*eigenständige Anwesenheit*), independent of other ontological conditions. Further on, Heidegger also remarks that for Aristotle there is the distinction between belonging to the subject **mereologically** (μέρος), as part in a whole, or belonging to the subject **essentially** (ύπάρχον αδύνατον χωρίς ειναι τοῦ έν ω εστιν): the Aristotelian expression έν ύποκειμένω, "in the subject" (*inesse* in the Latin expression used by Leibniz) has to reveal the predicate as pertaining essentially to the subject, such that the predicate cannot be conceived independently from it (*wesenhaft uneigenständig*). Thus, the entire structure of the Leibnizian subject, Heidegger shows, is dependent on the concept of the *independent*

presence (Aristotle's πρώτη ούσία or τόδε τι which Leibniz postulates as the Monad) that gives occurrence to the *individual substance* as pure and originary subject (ὑποκείμενον):

> Leibniz sees that this interpretation of substance takes its bearings from predication, and therefore a radical determination of the nature of predication, of judgment, must necessarily provide a primordial conception of substance. This concept of substance is the concept of the *subjectum*. (Heidegger, 1984 [1978], p. 32)

As a consequence, the concept of "subject" will appear in three pivotal meanings: that of the individual substance (ὑποκείμενον) which is the ontic subject, that of grammar's subject and that of the cognitive and perhaps psychological subject who distinguishes himself from the object. What follows in the Heideggerian text is the exposition of the doctrine of truth in the Leibnizian works: the truth can always be demonstrated inasmuch as the predicate that is attributed to the subject can be shown to be implied in the concept of the subject. This inclusion (*inesse*) is viewed in Leibniz as pertaining both to logic and ontology — not only the logical predicate is included in the logical subject, but the logical proposition is formed only inasmuch as this relation follows that of the ontic relation of the two: the predicate's being must be included in the subject's being too. Thus, the logic not only follows the ontic, but they are seen as coinciding (*zusammenfällt*); and this position already underlies itself a forged theory of metaphysics. (Heidegger, 1978 [1928], p. 44; Heidegger, 1984 [1978], p. 35) Of course, that which makes possible the relation between subject and predicate is the truth understood as identity and the theory of inclusion of the predicate in the subject is a theory of identity: "*inesse* ist *idem esse*". (Heidegger, 1978 [1928], p. 49; Heidegger, 1984 [1978], pp. 39-40) The question of identity, truth and being is thus the fundamental ontological question:

> Identity counts as the essence of truth, and for centuries identity counted as a feature of being (cf. the ταύτότης in Plato's *Sophist*). Truth and being are interpreted in view of the same phenomenon of sameness or identity. The question of truth and the question of being are directly intertwined. (Heidegger, 1984 [1978], p. 40)

Leibnizian theory goes further, as quoted by Heidegger, to demonstrate that all true propositions are reducible to identities if they are not immediate identities in themselves with the help of logical calculus. Through this mechanism all truth is provable a priori and all true knowledge "is ultimately a priori knowledge". (Heidegger, 1984 [1978], p. 40) But the main task of the Heideggerian exhibition of the analysis of the Leibnizian doctrine is to establish at last that the entire structure of *a priori* knowledge of Leibniz is derived from the idea of ground seen as the fourth principle of reason, the formulation of which has been attributed to Leibniz. The Leibnizian formulation of this principle, as quoted by Heidegger is: *Nihil est sine ratione cur potius sit quam non sit.*(Heidegger, 1978 [1928], p. 141; Heidegger, 1984 [1978], p. 114) Here, Heidegger finds that the entire issue is founded on the fundamental assumption that there is a preference of "something" over "nothing" and that there is, in the metaphysical tradition, an understanding of an inner correspondence and of inner harmony between beings because they are all encompassed in the fundamental communion or coherence or intelligibility, κοινωνία, which founds anything. (Heidegger, 1978 [1928], pp. 143-144; Heidegger, 1984 [1978], p. 116) What is the German term which is used by Heidegger to translate κοινωνία? The term is: "Zusammengehörigkeit". This term is precisely the one that he uses to name the identity of Being and Thinking in his seminal work that opened the onto-theological critique and the proposal of another kind of philosophy that would open the issue of the *Ungedachten*.

The Origin of Identity. The leap of the spring

As we discussed above, Heidegger contends that the entire affair of thinking in the Western metaphysical tradition is set on ignoring the ontological Difference and reducing the issue of the Abyss of Being and Nothing to the one-sidedness of a tautological Being. A tautological Being opens then the perspective of immediate arrival of the *Dasein* as the privileged subject who appropriates and manipulates beings as full presences undifferentiated from the essence of the originary Being.

Instrumental in this perspective of the turn of the Western metaphysics is the issue of the identity. Identity has been established as identity between Thinking and Being and this principle comes from Parmenides. As such, after contending that what Parmenides understood by identity does not coincide with what the metaphysical tradition has retained as mere tautology, he emphasizes that the main concept of identity in Parmenides would be that of the common origin of Being and Thinking, a Sameness that presents itself through them as a dual occurrence. Further on, Heidegger passes from the concept of the Sameness (*das Selbe*) in Parmenides (of which he says he will leave it obscure) to the meaning of the relation between Being and Thinking as they appear as related within the Same. The meaning of this relation is then framed by accentuating differently one of the two parts of the concept of "belonging ***together***" (***Zusammen***gehören) or of "***belonging*** together" (*Zusammen**gehören***).

In the first case, by accentuating "*together*" in spite of "belonging", philosophy makes an evident and most classic case of thinking the positing of beings as a reciprocal *nexus* or a *connexio* which refers implicitly to an order that is prearranged by the settling function of an all-encompassing identity of a manifold that assigns the place and the meaning of every element by the relative position that it occupies within the wholeness of a system.

Whereas in the second case, we would have the meaning of the concept by the accentuating the element of "*belonging*" in spite of "together"—this would entail a very different result concerning the premise of the concept of the Sameness (*Selbigkeit*). Firstly, Heidegger shows, this turn of accent puts us in the situation where we no longer think the relation of Being and Thinking under the conditions of the classical unity of manifolds and systems, but under the mysterious condition of subjectivity that gratifies man a privileged position towards Being to which he listens and for which he is necessary in order for the Being to come as presence[10], to manifest itself arriving at its own presence by the "openness of a clearing" (*das Offene einer Lichtung*) because this listening to Being pertains to what is "appropriated" (*übereignet*) to it (Heidegger, 1969 [1957], p. 31; Heidegger, 2006 [1957], pp. 39-40). It all so happens only in the measure where Being makes a "claim" (*Anspruch*) on man. This claim is possible because

> Man *is* essentially this relationship of responding to Being, and he is only this. This "only" does not mean a limitation, but rather an excess. (Heidegger, 1969 [1957], p. 31; Heidegger, 2006 [1957], p. 39)

How can all this be understood? Only by "moving away from the attitude of representational thinking" ("*der Haltung des vorstellenden Denkens absetzen*") which will have the meaning of "a leap in the sense of a spring"[11]

> The spring leaps away, away from the habitual idea of man as the rational animal who in modern times has become a subject for his objects. Simultaneously, the spring also leaps away from

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[10] "Denn erst der Mensch, offen für das Sein, läßt dieses als Anwesen ankommen." (Heidegger, 2006 [1957], p. 40).

[11] At the beginning of this paragraph Heidegger is surreptitiously using twice forms of the word *Kehre* ("Wir kehren noch nicht in das Zusammengehören ein. Wie aber kommt es zu einer solchen Einkehr?", pp. 40-41). Which might be an indicator that he is here already making hints about the new turn that is going to assign to his perspective over the concept of identity.

> Being. But Being, since the beginning of Western thought, has
> been interpreted as the ground in which every being as such is
> grounded. (Heidegger, 1969 [1957], p. 32; Heidegger, 2006 [1957],
> pp. 40-41)

The requirement to divorce representational thinking is altogether expected but also somewhat surprising taking into account Heidegger's indisposition towards Hegelian thought. Hegel has maintained in his entire work the need for thought to go beyond immediate representational thinking[12] as the effort to acquire the simultaneous position of the opposites in order for the *Aufhebung* to work. For Heidegger, renouncing representational thinking amounts to "leaping away from Being", meaning from the frame of thinking (*Gestell*) that has marked the Western positing of Being as the supreme instance of metaphysics from which every other existence or being (*Dasein*) would have sprung up. The result of this *Kehre* will be, for Heidegger, the known turn towards the position of Being as corelative to Man since without Man, in Heidegger's view, Being would have been effectless:

> Being itself, however, belongs to us; for only with us can
> Being be present as Being, that is, become present. (Heidegger,
> 1969 [1957], p. 33; Heidegger, 2006 [1957], p. 41)

Heidegger's German variant for the English expression in the above quote of "become present" is *An-wesen*. The word is constructed around

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[12] He has repeatedly emphasized this idea throughout his work; we hereby make reference to only a few occurrences present in the *Phenomenology of the Spirit* and in *The Science of Logic* (Hegel, 2018 [1807], pp. 14-16; Hegel, 2010 [1832], pp. 66-69; Hegel, 1970 [1807] W3, pp. 25-29; Hegel, 1969 [1832] W5, I, pp. 92-96).
We are hereby using the CUP English translation texts of 2010 by for George di Giovanni *The Science of Logic* and of 2018 by Terry Pinkard for *The Phenomenology of the Spirit*. We have cross-referenced them with the *Werke in 20 Bänden* (complete works in 20 volumes), E. Moldenhauer and K. M. Michel eds., Suhrkamp Verlag, Frankfurt am Main, 1969-1971 edition that was at our disposal and that provides any German citation or reference of Hegel's work within our paper.

the concept of "*Wesen*" which has itself a long and rich history in the German idealism: one of its most notorious occurrences is the Hegelian "*Wesen*" from *The Science of Logic* that constitutes the second part of the work: that of the **Essence** chapter (Hegel, 2010 [1832], pp. 337-505; Hegel, 1969 [1832] W6, II, pp. 17-240)[13]. Hegel indicates that *Wesen* is *gewesen*: the Essence is the Being that has passed beyond its own immediate presence into the mediated and reflected actuality of its own passing. What Hegel is intending here to articulate is precisely the famous and classic concept of τὸ τί ἦν εἶναι (Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1029b) (Aristotle, 1998, p. 178 & sqq.). Heidegger, on the other hand, speaks here of the moment of actualization of the essential relation between Man and Being, where Man is the essential medium of the manifestation of Being in its entire authenticity and only the human subject is that who can provide the necessary receptacle of the manifestation of this essence of Being (*Anwesen*), Man is the "here-essential-presence" (our expression) through language which alone could attain the essential light of the appropriation (*Er-eignis*):

> Der Satz gibt sich zunächst in der Form eines Grundsatzes, der die Identität als einen Zug im Sein, d. h. im Grund des Seienden voraussetzt. Aus diesem Satz im Sinne einer Aussage ist unterwegs ein Satz geworden von der Art eines Sprunges, der sich vom Sein

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[13] Here is the place to remind that the difference between Being (*Sein*) and Essence (*Wesen*) in Hegel also implies the difference between two kind of acts: the actual immediate act of Being and the past mediated act of Essence. As Hegel puts it:

> Being is the immediate. Since the goal of knowledge is the truth, what being is in and for itself, knowledge does not stop at the immediate and its determinations, but penetrates beyond it on the presupposition that behind this being there still is something other than being itself, and that this background constitutes the truth of being. This cognition is a mediated knowledge, for it is not to be found with and in essence immediately, but starts off from an other, from being, and has a prior way to make, the way that leads over and beyond being or that rather penetrates into it. Only inasmuch as knowledge recollects itself into itself out of immediate being, does it find essence through this mediation.—The German language has kept "essence" (Wesen) in the past participle (gewesen) of the verb "to be" (sein), for essence is past—but timelessly past—being. (Hegel, 2010 [1832], p. 337)

als dem Grund des Seienden absetzt und so in den Abgrundspringt. Doch dieser Abgrund ist weder das leere Nichts noch eine finstere Wirrnis, sondern: das Er-eignis. Im Er-eignis schwingt das Wesen dessen, was als Sprache spricht, die einmal das Haus des Seins genannt wurde. Satz der Identität sagt jetzt: Ein Sprung, den das Wesen der Identität verlangt, weil es ihn braucht, wenn anders das Zusammen*gehören* von Mensch und Sein in das Wesenslicht des Ereignisses gelangen soll. (Heidegger, 2006 [1957], p. 48)[14]

Essence of Being and Essence of Man spring from the Sameness

Thus, we can make the following abbreviation of Heidegger's position— *Übereignet* in Heidegger's *Principle of identity* and its manifest corresponding *Ereignis* is nothing more than whatever manifests through the being of historical man. Whatever manifests as the essence of the historical man, his *An-wesen*, pertains to the constellation of Being and Man as appropriated in reciprocity and which gives the result of the *Ge-stell* in the epoch of the atom and technology. The *Ereignis* is the manifestation itself as revelation of a new and authentic horizon of the common origin of the Being and of Man

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[14] In the English version:

> The law appears at first in the form of a fundamental principle which presupposes identity as a characteristic of Being, that is, of the ground of beings. This principle in the sense of a statement has in the meantime become a principle bearing the characteristics of a spring that departs from Being as the ground of beings, and this springs into the abyss. But this abyss is neither empty nothingness nor murky confusion, but rather: the event of appropriation. In the event of appropriation vibrates the active nature of what speaks as language, which at one time was called the house of Being. "Principle of identity" means now: a spring demanded by the essence of identity because it needs that spring if the *belonging* together of man and Being is to attain the essential light of the appropriation. (Heidegger, 1969 [1957], p. 39)

We will come back to this fragment where one can see the significance of the concept of "spring" that departs from Being in its immediacy, as Heidegger already mentioned above in his text (Heidegger, 1969 [1957], p. 33; Heidegger, 2006 [1957], pp. 41-42).

in the Sameness. *Ge-stell* is the result of the actualization of the constellation of Being's and Man's coappropriation in the calculation and taking into possession of the world by the Man. And the *Übereignis* as Zusammen*gehören* is the ontological-transcendental condition that renders all this process possible and reveals Being and Man as given to one another.

Thus, the *belonging* is the coappropriation of Man and Being in their Sameness as reciprocal movement together in their concealment-revealment.

The new *Ge-stell* of technology, planning and calculation is the new manner through which Man manifests himself in his new world essence as he has become a new *Dasein*, that of the atomic age.

Thus, the essence of Being reveals as essence of the new Man. And this essence is derivable and variable as Being is not anymore something heavenly fixed in the system of the traditional metaphysics, but something that is opened by the coappropriation of Man and Being. It only pertains to the Sameness which remains undefinable in Heidegger's terms. The essence of Being is the essence of Man and this latter is becoming as revelation through appropriation, *Ereignis* and their result, the constellation of which the *Ge-stell* is the actual form of this constellation in the world of technology and of calculation. Constellation and *Ge-stell* loosely correspond to the old concept of *paradigm*: the constellation being the horizon of possibility for the actualization of the thinking of an epoch; while the *Ge-stell* is the concrete occurrence of this horizon in our epoch but only as much as Man co-appropriates Being and lets it reveal through himself.

The coappropriation is given by the Sameness: in their origin, Being and Man are Zusammen*gehören*. And their *belonging* together makes them related within their origin. This relatedness manifests itself as reciprocal assignment to one another as codependency or *Übereignis*. The meaning of this is that they are coassigned from their origin, by the very Sameness, to reveal one another, reciprocally.

What is the Sameness that springs the "*belonging* together" of Being and Man? Let Heidegger speak in his own words:

> So wird denn, um das Zusammen*gehören* von Mensch und Sein eigens zu erfahren, ein Sprung nötig. Dieser Sprung ist das Jähe der brückenlosen Einkehr in jenes Gehören, das erst ein Zueinander von Mensch und Sein und damit die Konstellation beider zu vergeben hat. Der Sprung ist die jähe Einfahrt in den Bereich, aus dem her Mensch und Sein einander je schon in ihrem Wesen erreicht haben, weil beide aus einer Zureichung einander übereignet sind. Die Einfahrt in den Bereich dieser Übereignung stimmt und be-stimmt erst die Erfahrung des Denkens. (Heidegger, 2006 [1957], pp. 41-42)[15]

The Sameness of identity is the original spring that immediately gives its essence as the effectiveness of Being and Man in their being in originary relation of "*belonging* together" (*Zusammen**gehören***) as their reciprocal constellation that passes in the mutual challenge and facing each other ("*des Herausforderns, das Mensch und Sein einander so zu-stellt, daß sie sich wechselweise stellen*") as Framing (*Ge-stell*) of the atomic age and the opening of which would grant the authenticity of the relation of Being and Man as Appropriation (*Er-eignis*). The immediate essence of the Sameness is given as belonging together of Being and Man only if Man is capable of going beyond the determinations that traditional metaphysics has burdened both of them with:

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[15] The English version:

> Thus a spring is needed in order to experience authentically the *belonging* together of man and Being. This spring is the abruptness of the unbridged entry into that belonging which alone can grant a toward-each-other of man and Being, and thus the constellation of the two. The spring is the abrupt entry into the realm from which man and Being have already reached each other in their active nature, since both are mutually appropriated, extended as a gift, one to the other. Only the entry into the realm of this mutual appropriation determines and defines the experience of thinking. (Heidegger, 1969 [1957], p. 33)

> We do not as yet enter the domain of the *belonging* together. How can such an entry come about? By our moving away from the attitude of representational thinking. This move is a leap in the sense of a spring. The spring leaps away, away from the habitual idea of man as the rational animal who in modern times has become a subject for his objects. Simultaneously, the spring also leaps away from Being. But Being, since the beginning of Western thought, has been interpreted as the ground in which every being as such is grounded. (Heidegger, 1969 [1957], p. 32)[16]

As far as Man is not capable of letting go to this traditional principle of thinking, he will not be capable, Heidegger believes, to open himself to an authentic relation with Being and, thus, to get out of his *Ge-stell* in order to gain entry (*Einkehr*) into the realm of the Appropriation (*Er-eignis*). Thus, in order for Man to enter his *singular tantum* as *Er-eignis*, he must go back to the spring that defines how Being and Man are given to each other, how they originary belong to each other. Therefore, Man must go back to the spring of the Sameness, meaning that he must get the originary sense of the principle of identity through a fundamental entry (*Einkehr*) in his divorce from the old metaphysics (Heidegger, 1969 [1957], p. 41; Heidegger, 2006 [1957], pp. 49-50). In doing this, the essence of Being could be plainly manifested in the essence of Man, the spring of the Sameness giving birth to the becoming present (*An-wesen*) of the essence bearing and revealing the event of Appropriation (*Er-eignis*).

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[16] The German original:

> Wir kehren noch nicht in das Zusammen*gehören* ein. Wie aber kommt es zu einer solchen Einkehr? Dadurch, daß wir uns von der Haltung des vorstellenden Denkens absetzen. Dieses Sichabsetzen ist ein Satz im Sinne eines Sprunges. Er springt ab, nämlich weg aus der geläufigen Vorstellung vom Menschen als dem animal rationale, das in der Neuzeit zum Subjekt für seine Objekte geworden ist. Der Absprung springt zugleich weg vom Sein. Dieses wird jedoch seit der Frühzeit des abendländischen Denkens als der Grund ausgelegt, worin jedes Seiende als Seiendes gründet. (Heidegger, 2006 [1957], pp. 40-41)

Thus, Heidegger's position is that the essence of Being that transpires in Man, language or the word, should be the ultimate vehicle that should turn thinking towards the spring of the originary Sameness. Language is that which differentiates, also. Thus, language is the fundamental vehicle of thinking that should change the act of the human essence: our deeds should follow our thinking that has been opened to the possibility of *Er-eignis* by the total surrender of our language to the essence of identity that would have surpassed the structure of thinking manifest in the old metaphysics and that would be capable of finding the authenticity of the together *belonging* of Man and Being.

At this point it is possible for us to turn again to the other Heideggerian text, that we announced at the beginning of this section—that which concerns *Die ontotheologische Verfassung der Metaphysik*. Because it is precisely in this text that, as mentioned in the beginning, Heidegger invites us to take the "step back" (*Schritt zurück*) through which thinking should find its authenticity. Later on, our discussion will also take into consideration Hegel's work on the problem of identity, ontological Difference and authenticity of Thinking and Being. In this regard, we have found remarkably interesting perspectives on the Hegelian texts in the **Being** section especially, and a few in the **Essence** section of *The Science of Logic*. We shall discuss these perspectives in the B. and C. sections of the present work.

II. Hegelian onto-theo-logy
and Heideggerian *Unverborgenheit*

Aufhebung or *Schritt zurück*?[17]

The Hegelian "definition" or explanation for the concept of *Aufhebung* is given in the *Science of Logic*:

> What is sublated does not thereby turn into nothing. Nothing is the *immediate*; something sublated is on the contrary something *mediated*; it is something nonexistent but as a result that has proceeded from a being; it still *has in itself*, therefore, the *determinateness from which it derives*. (Hegel, 2010 [1832], p. 81)

This central concept of Hegelian speculative thought is here explicitly put in relation to what we could call the *act-of-what-came-to-be* as put into its own ontological exhaustion.

First, the concept invites to the consideration of something being annulled or suspended as it would have reached its limit or its fundamental term for expiring as terminally exhausted.

Secondly, this expiring is not the liberated place that is given to the advent of another determination that would posit itself in the same manner and in the same terms as the one that has just been superseded. The exhaustion

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[17] We are profoundly indebted for this part of our text to late Professor Bernard Mabille whom we had the privilege of meeting in a research internship in 2012-2013, at the Poitiers University, France, where he lectured. To honor his memory, the present subchapter title has been chosen as a direct reference to the title of a subchapter of his famous and much appreciated book *Hegel, Heidegger et la métaphysique. Recherches pour une constitution* (**Aufhebung** et **Schritt zurück**, pp. 43-54) that we have specifically referenced and quoted in the present work.

of the determinacy that has just been put aside is immediately and implicitly achieved in itself: the exhaustion is not that of the determinacy, but of the horizon of any determinacy whatsoever. The limit that this exhaustion reveals is the ontological limit of determinacy as principle.

And, third, the revelation of this limit coincides with its overcoming: exhaustion means here excess; and the excess brings upon the immediate shortcut of the excess' infinity, thus the overcome of determination into the immediate unity of mediated sublation: that which has been annulled is simultaneously preserved.

But in this passing beyond determinacy, the movement of sublation opens itself to a different horizon, it gains a new fundamental perspective upon the entire ontological frame: the point of the determinacy which was proper the position of the reflective and immediate representational thought where any instance is circumscribed by opposing determinacies, is ultimately left behind and thought finally reaches the moment of the whole, as Hegel would have called it, or of the identity of the opposites that has been made possible by the fundamental defusing of the tension of contradiction that reigns as principle of objectual alterity.

This identity further reveals in itself the true disclosure of the essence of the principle that commands the relation between the opposites and their true calling: that of manifesting the singular undetermined immediacy in the multiplicity of determinacies as their ultimate condition and estranged coincidence. That is the true meaning of Hegel's ascertainment that what is sublated is not thereby reduced to nothing since nothing is absolute immediacy, while the sublated is always that which has already been determined and as such is always mediated. That is entirely correct; but it also tacitly discloses that without the abstract immediacy that is the fundamental support from the beginning of any movement, mediation would not happen. In fact, mediation is nothing but the sublated (*Aufheben*) effect of the self-movement

of immediacy. Thus, determinacy could not turn itself back into pure and absolute or originary abstract immediacy when annulled by the inherent exhaustion of its own limits, but its own annulment is in a prerequisite manner the originary manifestation of the immediacy that overcomes determinacy's circumcision through its exhaustion and that brings determinacy's journey to its closure by the radically transfigurative meaning that it acquires in its synthesis with its opposing variation.

In this synthesis, neither immediacy nor mediation are kept apart, but they concur in uniting into the ontologically transformed life of a true renewal. Thus, in the movement of *Aufhebung*, *the form* of the entire journey is that of **immediacy** that manifests itself into the suddenness of determinacy's exhaustion, while **mediation** assures the determined *content* of this transformative occurrence, a content that reveals to be the concrete effectiveness of the ultimate immediacy. (Vetö, 2000, pp. 39-41)

> The German "*aufheben*" ("to sublate" in English) has a twofold meaning in the language: it equally means "*to keep*," "to 'preserve'," and "to cause to cease," "*to put an end to*." Even "to preserve" already includes a negative note, namely that something, in order to be retained, is removed from its immediacy and hence from an existence which is open to external influences.—That which is sublated is thus something at the same time preserved, something that has lost its immediacy but has not come to nothing for that.—These two definitions of "to sublate" can be cited as two dictionary *meanings* of the word. (...) Something is sublated only in so far as it has entered into unity with its opposite; in this closer determination as something reflected, it may fittingly be called a *moment*. In the case of the lever, "*weight*" and "*distance* from a point" are called its mechanical *moments* because of the *sameness* of their effect, in spite of the difference between something real like weight, and something idealized such as the merely spatial determination of "line." (See *Encycl.*

> *of the Phil. Sc.*, 3rd edn, §261, Remark.) (...) (Hegel, 2010 [1832],
> pp. 81-82)

Let us pay attention to this Hegelian expression: "something that has lost its immediacy but has not come to nothing for that". In other words, something that loses its immediacy achieves that through immediacy itself, since only immediacy is that which gives truth to the passing of what is constituted on limits. Thus, *even immediacy annuls and preserves itself into its own absolute and immediate exhaustion of itself*, because *the limit of immediacy is immediacy itself and that limit is immediately given*. This passing of absolute immediacy, as we shall see in a following chapter, is the principle of the Hegelian speculative movement and reasoning since it is what puts the entire *Science of Logic* in motion when the abstractedness and pure immediate occurrence of Being immediately reveals itself as being pure Nothing and then immediately passes into Nothing as pure coincidence and difference thereof and thus, Being and Nothing reveal themselves absolutely identical and different as absolute Becoming.

> The more precise sense and precise expression that being
> and nothing receive now that they are *moments* will have to
> transpire from the consideration of existence, the unity in which
> they are preserved. Being is being, and nothing is nothing, only
> as held distinct from each other; in their truth, however, in
> their unity, they have vanished as such determinations and are
> now something else. Being and nothing are the same and, *precisely
> because they are the same*, *they no longer are being and nothing*
> but possess a different determination; in becoming they were
> coming-to-be and ceasing-to-be; in existence, which is another
> determinate unity, they are again moments but differently deter-
> mined. This unity now remains their base from which they no
> longer surface in the abstract meaning of being and nothing.
> (Hegel, 2010 [1832], p. 82)

Even Heidegger seems to have seized this dimension of the Hegelian concept in another work, *Hegels Phänomenologie des Geistes* (Heidegger, 1980; Heidegger, 1988), when he says that in Hegel absolute knowing is not about full and unfolded presence, but it is about the "character" and the "way" in which the absolute is, meaning

> ...the *absolute restlessness* of mediation, which alone can be *absolutely* immediate, can be *relative* in an *absolute* manner, *so* absolute that it *is* relative and, *being relative*, brings about its dissolution. It precisely in showing *how* as absolute it *is* absolute, that the absolute comes to light in the *Phenomenology*. But in the absolute this *how* of *being* absolute is at the same time its *what*—the distinction between what and now (or *essentia* and *existentia*) has basically no place in the absolute. But in order to characterize the absolute *specifically* with regard to its *being absolute*, as an absolute knowing, we would like to introduce a term which expresses more precisely this manner of knowing absolutely. We shall be speaking of restless absolute knowledge as *absolvent* (in the sense of absolution). Then we can say that the essence of the absolute is the in-finite absolving, and therein negativity and positivity are at the same time absolute or in-finite. (Heidegger, 1988, p. 51)

Here we can remark that the issue of the "sameness" (*dasselbe*) appears in the Hegelian text as the first occurrence of the tautology and, as such, of the identity of the first two terms that are immediately given as immediately identical to one another: Being and Nothing. In Hegel's terms:

> Being and nothing are the same and, *precisely because they are the same, they no longer are being and nothing* but possess a different determination. (Hegel, 2010 [1832], p. 82)

Their sameness (*dasselbe*) gives also, as we may observe, the first occurrence of the annulment of the pure coincidence of Being as origin and Being as determination:

> It is the unity of being and nothing that has become quiescent simplicity. But this quiescent simplicity is being, yet no longer for itself but as determination of the whole. (Hegel, 2010 [1832], p. 81)

Hereby, the "sameness" of Being and Nothing is engaged in a twofold perspective: either the "sameness" is given as immediate determination of identity of the elements involved, which would bring us in the domain of the formal logic; either the "sameness" is given as immediate undetermined identity that is the horizon of realization and of effectiveness of Being.

In his *Metaphysische Anfangsgründe der Logik*, Heidegger shows that traditional metaphysics has dealt with the ground of propositional truth in terms of

> ...*nexus, connexio, inclusio, identitas*: the cohesion of subject and predicate, of concepts, representations. (...) Truth is equated with the belonging together of subject and predicate. What rightly belongs together is correct. (Heidegger, 1984 [1978], p. 123)

In fact, what this "belonging together" of the subject and of the predicate (*Zusammengehörigkeit von Subjekt und Prädikat*) here means, Heidegger shows, is identity in the combinations of representations (*Vorstellungsverbindung*). This identity gives the truth which is seen in this position as "the validity of a combination of representations" (*Wahrheit ist Gültigkeit einer Vorstellungsverbindung*). This Leibnizian coincidence between *veritas* and *identitas* would not give as the authentic answer, but only a half-truth. (Heidegger, 1978 [1928], p. 154; Heidegger, 1984 [1978], pp. 123-124) The issue here is the compelling truth of any knowledge, thus of any identity between subject and predicate, as Heidegger meaningfully observes:

> What determines the correctness of a combination of representations, i.e., their coherence as a harmony? What decides whether a combination is correct or not? (Heidegger, 1984 [1978], p. 124)

Concerning Hegel, Heidegger, as we shown above, tried to treat the Hegelian position as a culmination of the Western metaphysical tradition where the difference between Being (*Sein*) and beings (*Seiende*) has been reduced to a horizontal relation between attributes of beings. This matter of difference that implies the multiplicity of beings is reduced, says Heidegger, to the problem of regionalized multiplicities and differences. (Heidegger, 1978 [1928]; Heidegger, 1984 [1978], p. 152) Then, Hegel would be nothing more then totalization of the system of these differences and multiplicities in the monumental doctrine of the speculative difference, the task of which would be the total annulment of the ontological *Difference* and the total identification between *essentia* and *existentia*. That is why Heidegger invites us to take a "step back" (*Schritt zurück*) from such positions and to assess the issue of transcendence, thus, of identity and of difference in a complete reevaluation of the *Zusammengehörigkeit* not as a matter of *validity* (*Gültigkeit*), but as a matter of the *Sameness* (*Selbigkeit*) (Heidegger, 1978 [1928], p. 50; Heidegger, 1984 [1978], p. 40) that will entail 30 years later in Heidegger's thought the co-appropriation of Man and Being. This Heideggerian position would suppose that the speculative method is nothing more but a dialectic and that there is no truthful opening in it.

Professor Mabille's development (Mabille, 2004) on the subject of authentic speculative position towards history gives us the privilege of knowing that Heidegger's perspective on Hegelian speculation is erroneous and saves us the effort of pursuing further the issue: Mabille's conclusion is that Heidegger misses the Hegelian position of the issue of identity and difference and as a consequence, misconstrues entirely Hegel's doctrine on *Aufhebung*, predication and history. (Mabille, 2004, pp. 40-54) Only to briefly indicate a point of Mabille's argument, we might remember for example that Hegel does not translate Parmenides' fragment by identifying directly thought of *Dasein* with being, which would entail the reprise of *Dasein* as fundamental Being—Heidegger's contention in *Hegel und die Griechen*

(Heidegger, 1976, p. 435) being that Hegel would translate Parmenides' position as "*Sein und Denken sind dasselbe*" (**Being and Thought are the same**), while Hegel's rendering is, in fact: "*Denken ist also mit seinem Sein identisch*" (**Thus, Thought is identic with its own Being**) (Hegel, 1971 [1832] W18, p. 289). From this immediate superposition of thought and being would follow injustice from Hegel's part against Parmenides' tradition of identity such that it would culminate in reducing eminent Being to Ground; then instantiating *Dasein*, which is determinate or existential being, as fundamental Being; then reducing the ontological Difference to ontic difference(s) and eliminating absolute and authentic negativity of the Abyss by the operationality of the *Aufhebung* (Mabille, 2004, pp. 12-13, 40-42, 44-49). As such, Heidegger contended, Hegel would operate a simple reduction of all thought to operational subjects that are validated through their individuality as subjects of apperception and of conceptualization: through conceptualizing (*Begreifen*) which implies (in German mainly) not as much "giving birth" to thoughts, as seizing or grasping thoughts' meaning, thus seizing or grabbing things' being. As such, any possible independent and free alterity of *Dasein* is compelled to diminish and limit itself to what *Dasein* intends for it to be, thus *Dasein* imposes itself dominantly as the "*absolute Begründung*" ("absolute foundation in reason"; reason which here pertains to that of *Dasein*, to the determined, historical subject) of reality. The Hegelian project of metaphysics would be, then, a metaphysics of power (*Macht*) and mastery or control (*Herrschaft*) (Mabille, 2004, pp. 43-44) which would culminate in the assimilation and annexation of the entire history of Western metaphysics within and to the Hegelian doctrine on the basis of an inauthentic relation with history and time themselves.

But even more evident is this error if we shortly expose here the Hegelian considerations concerning the issue of the propositional identity that is given in the speculative relation of the subject to the predicate. There are two instances where Hegel discusses the matter of speculative thinking:

one, in the *Phenomenology of the Spirit's* **Preface**, where he exposes the nature of the speculative relation between subject and predicate (Hegel, 2018 [1807]); the other, in the *Science of Logic* (Hegel, 2010 [1832], pp. 81-82), where he speaks of the *Aufhebung* operation as crucial to the speculative treatment of the relation between concepts as a development of his doctrine of Becoming in general and of the sublation of Becoming in particular.

First, what is to be observed is that Hegel departs from the premise that the entire system of thought is to grasp the true "not just as *substance* but as much as *subject*" (Hegel, 2018 [1807], p. 12; Hyppolite, 1946 II, pp. 476-477) and that any living substance

> …is the being that is in truth *subject*, or, what amounts to the same thing, it is in truth actual only insofar as it is the movement of self-positing, or, that it is the mediation of itself and its becoming-other-to-itself. As subject, it is pure, *simple negativity*, and, as a result, it is the estrangement of what is simple, or, it is the doubling which posits oppositions and which is again the negation of this indifferent diversity and its opposition. That is, it is only this *self-restoring* sameness, the reflective turn into itself in its otherness. (Hegel, 2018 [1807], p. 12)

Hegel's "self-restoring sameness" (*wiederherstellende Gleichheit*), as "simple negativity", is the result of the "estrangement of what is simple" (*Entzweiung des Einfachen*), of a "mediation of itself" and "mediation and its becoming-other-to-itself" (*Vermittlung des Sichanderswerdens mit sich selbst*) (Hegel, 1970 [1807] W3, p. 23) and this is the Hegelian subject. But in this, the Hegelian speculative subject is not the *Dasein* of history and objectuality, an element within whom would still dwell the duality of subject and object and the exteriority and accidentality of the attachment of a predicate that would be added synthetically through experience, neither of a predicate that would tautologically result from the subject's substance by analytic operations of intellect. The Hegelian treatment of the speculative

proposition in the **Preface** of the *Phenomenology…* is edifying on this matter.

After making it clear that there is mediation in what substance and subject imply in themselves and to each other, Hegel passes to the idea that "*The life of God and divine cognition might thus be expressed as a game love plays with itself*"[18] (Hegel, 2018 [1807], p. 13), an Idea (*Idee*) which would lower itself to mere edifying and trite representational immediateness if it weren't be divided, mediated by "the seriousness, the suffering, the patience, and the labor of the negative" (*der Ernst, der Schmerz, die Geduld und Arbeit des Negativen*). This alienation, Hegel continues, is a mere play for the divine essence who retains its serene sovereignty beyond and over any negativity that would imply its tearing apart. But this is only immediacy as such, in-itself, while the nature of the divine life and of the universal is to be-for-itself, thus, to mediate itself into itself in its own estrangement and to find then itself as identical in this estrangement. In this Hegel employs the distinction and the speculative dialectic between essence and form: essence must be grasped as more than "mere Essence" (*ist es nicht bloß als Wesen*), where "mere Essence" is, in fact, "immediate Substance" (*unmittelbare Substanz*) or "pure self-intuition of the divine" (*reine Selbstanschauung des Göttlichen*) (Hegel, 1970 [1807] W3, p. 24), but a "speculative intuition" that in the metaphysical or religious perception can relate the absoluteness and totality of the union between the finite and the infinite, thus going beyond mere religious *Vostellung*, and avoiding the one-sidedness of the other religions outside that of Revelation. (Pannenberg, 2004 [1991] I, pp. 166-168) But this immediate Substance or Essence in its immediate mediation or alienation from itself and coincidence in this alienation is the main issue to be addressed if we are to understand the point of departure of the Hegelian enterprise. In other words what we are dealing here with is the issue of absolute identity

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[18] "*…ein Spielen der Liebe mit sich selbst*" (Hegel, 1970 [1807] W3, p. 24).

in its fundamental origin. The truth of this identity is what must be clarified—and right a few lines further Hegel tells us that the truth is the whole and it presents itself essentially as a result before we could be entertaining the thought that it should be regarded as an immediate or, which is the same, as a beginning. The reason for this assessment is that truth cannot be something partial or abstract: it must be concrete, alive and effective; thus, it must already be seen as completed in itself; thus, it is whole, without any lack— "Das Wahre ist das Ganze" (Hegel, 1970 [1807] W3, p. 24), "The true is the whole" (Hegel, 2018 [1807], p. 13), in Hegel's words. And this completeness is active in itself, it contains itself as divided through its own negativity that it opens and vanquishes in itself through its own identity in this es-trangement. But this entails that the truth of the subject being the whole as identity of the immediate Substance or Essence in its own division against itself, it is movement, becoming or, more precisely, it is becoming-of-itself (*Sichselbstwerden zu sein*). (Doz, 1987, p. 47) The immediacy of the beginning is not conducive to this effectiveness unless it immediately puts at our disposal the totality of elements, the whole multiplicity that it involves or assumes. Whatever goes beyond mere simplicity of the immediacy carries with it and opens itself towards this "*becoming-other*" (*Anderswerden*) (Hegel, 1970 [1807] W3, p. 25) which is the redeemable mediation. Even the "mere transition to a proposition" (from single words which would evoke the intuition of and as the immediate), becomes engaged in this *Anderswerden* that representational thinking believes should abandon in order to gain access to the pure immediacy of the intuitively divine which is beyond any form of fragmentation and multiplicity. But, Hegel explains, mediation is abhorred only because conscience misses the nature of mediation:

> ...mediation is nothing but self-moving self-equality, or, it is a reflective turn into itself, the moment of the I existing-for-itself, pure negativity, or, *simple coming-to-be*. The I, or, coming-to-be, this mediating, is, on account of its simplicity, immediacy

in the very process of coming-to-be and is the immediate itself. (Hegel, 2018 [1807], p. 14)[19]

With this, the Hegelian doctrine of the subject essentially reveals the absolute coincidence of subject and object as absolute identity between identity and difference. Identity *is* difference. Or, which pertains to the same, identity is self-differentiating as simple immediacy with itself, that is, immediacy that is mediation in itself immediately, put as such by its own immediacy of itself as pure and simple result. Or, as Hegel puts it:

> ...reason is misunderstood if reflection is excluded from the truth and is not taken to be a positive moment of the absolute. Reflection is what makes truth into the result, but it is likewise what sublates the opposition between the result and its coming-to-be. This is so because this coming-to-be is just as simple and hence not different from the form of the true, which itself proves itself to be *simple* in its result. Coming-to-be is instead this very return into simplicity. (Hegel, 2018 [1807], p. 14)

This "*Zurückgegangensein in die Einfachheit*", "return into simplicity" is immediacy itself as "*werdende Unmittelbarkeit*", a "becoming immediacy" in itself, as intimate and essential motion of the speculative: it is Hegel's speculative identity. And Hegel's speculative identity is the subject's movement of immediately alienating and uniting through alienating. That is why Hegel considers in the next lines of the **Preface** by identifying the Essence or the Substance with the purpose:

> ...purpose is the immediate, the motionless, which is self-moving, or, is subject. Its abstract power to move is *being-for-itself*, or, pure negativity. (Hegel, 2018 [1807], p. 14)

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[19] The German original:

Denn die Vermittlung ist nichts anderes als die sich bewegende Sichselbstgleichheit, oder sie ist die Reflexion in sich selbst, das Moment des fürsichseienden Ich, die reine Negativität oder, auf ihre reine Abstraktion herabgesetzt, das *einfache Werden*. (Hegel, 1970 [1807] W3, p. 25)

But is this subject that is the pivotal point of the speculation reducible to the *Dasein* of the determined and historic subject, as Heidegger accuses? Or is there more to it and Heidegger is wrong?

The entire answer revolves around the issue of speculation: we should understand what speculation implies in order to decide if the identity that Hegel postulates between Being and Thought is the reduction to a *Begründung* and *Dasein* or not.

The speculative proposition, Hegel says, is fundamentally tied to the theology question: what is God or what is the Absolute? (Hegel, 1970 [1807] W3, p. 26; Hegel, 2018 [1807], pp. 14-15) The chief principle that orients speculation is that it must never be a partial assertion or proposition and it must always seek to achieve the whole of the concerned element. The second principle is that speculation cannot pursue the whole or the true identity of the issue if this dimension does not assume or meet its contradiction or its annulment. Speculation needs radical negativity for the evident reason that only a radical negation of an element can actualize the horizon of a true unity through that negativity itself, or, in other words, it takes an absolute identity to sublate an absolute negation. A partial identity cannot even grasp or contain, let alone sublate an absolute negativity and resolve an absolute contradiction. This principle reveals that speculation cannot proceed to any kind of identity or unity or opposites unless the unity of the partial and of the total cannot be given but by sublating the partial which, otherwise, would never be able to participate in the speculative undertaking. And in this, the partial, the ineffective and the unequal are, thus, essential parts of the speculative movement as Hegel shows a few pages further when he speaks of the necessity of the false and of the unequal in the speculative movement in order to be sublated for the whole, the effective, the true and the equal to take hold of the entire result of the speculation. (Hegel, 1970 [1807] W3, p. 40; Hegel, 2018 [1807], p. 24) That is why, at the same passage, Hegel makes expressly notice of the fact that the sublation of the false, the

equal etc. in the speculative result does not maintain the negative as such in the result because sublation has completely transfigured the negative which has become something else. That is why the essential moment of the false in the apparition of the truth does not survive as such as an essential moment of truth in itself obtained as a result of sublation:

> For that reason, it cannot be said that the *false* constitutes a moment or even a constituent part of the true. Take the saying that "In every falsehood, there is something true"—in this expression both of them are regarded as oil and water, which cannot mix and are only externally combined. It is precisely for the sake of pointing out the significance of the moment of *complete otherness* that their expression must no longer be employed in the instances where their otherness has been sublated. Just as the expressions, "*unity* of subject and object" or of "the finite and infinite," or of "being and thinking," etc., have a certain type of clumsiness to them in that subject and object, etc., mean what *they are outside of their unity*, and therefore in their unity, they are not meant in the way that their expression states them, so too the false as the false is no longer a moment of truth. (Hegel, 2018 [1807], pp. 24-25)

Practically, by *Aufhebung*, *sublation*, Hegel aims at the very heart of the soteriological transfiguration by the intervention of the absolute negativity, the palingenetic alchemy of the subject into substance and of the substance into subject, the power of the resurrection from the dead. The theological implications are evident the more so as Giorgio Agamben shows (Agamben, 2005 [2000], pp. 98-99), on the tracks of St. John Chrysostom,[20] that the

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[20] Agamben's reference here for the Patristical author is John Chrysostom: *On the Incomprehensible Nature of God*, trans. Paul W. Harkins, Fathers of the Church, vol. 72, Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2002, p. 55. French edition, **Sur l'incompréhensibilité de Dieu**, vol. I of *Homélies*, vols. 1-5, éd. Anne-Marie Malingrey (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1970).

term of *Aufhebung* itself has been taken from Luther's translation of the Bible for the messianic term of *katargēsis* and of the verb *katargein* used by Saint Apostle Paul in the *Epistle to the Romans 3:19-31* to exhibit that what the Incarnation and Resurrection of the Christ has done is to have deactivated, superseded and fulfilled the old Law of the Old Covenant. The Pauline term made some, like Origen, to think there would have been some sort of contradiction between the two positions of the Apostle. But St. John Chrysostom shown that it had the meaning of a fulfillment (*plērōsis*) that supervened once that the old element that was in act in the old Revelation had been deactivated, rendered inoperative, but nevertheless kept, conserved, increased and transfigured into something better.

But what could be that sort of element which could bestow on another the supreme and mysterious power of *Aufhebung* in order to inscribe it into such eminent soteriology? The supreme and absolute identity that can revive in and through an absolute death or negativity, Hegel specifies with emphasis numerous times, as it is known. But as Professor Vieillard-Baron has shown, (Vieillard-Baron, 2006, pp. 46-50) multiple Hegelian text fragments reveal plainly Hegel's intention. In the closing of *Faith and Knowledge* (Hegel, 1970 [1802] W2, pp. 432-433; Hegel, 1977 [1802], p. 191), for example, it is revealed that

> Thereby it must re-establish for philosophy the Idea of absolute freedom and along with it the absolute Passion, the speculative Good Friday in place of the historic Good Friday. Good Friday must be speculatively re-established in the whole truth and harshness of its God-forsakenness. Since the [more] serene, less well grounded, and more individual style of the dogmatic philosophies and of the natural religions must vanish, the highest totality can and must achieve its resurrection solely from this harsh consciousness of loss, encompassing everything, and ascending in all its earnestness and out of its deepest ground to the most serene freedom of its shape.

The quoted fragment closes the conclusion where Hegel discusses the moment of the alienation of spirit where the fundamental gap between history and God is achieved as the moment of *Aufklärung* concentrated for Hegel in that fragment, in the transcendental doctrine of Kant. Absolute freedom is given, thus, only when the entire truth (*Wahrheit*) and harshness (*Härte*) of the absence of God (*Gottlosigkeit*) which has been given to us by the absolute Passion (*das absolute Leiden*), the death on the Cross, in the Good Friday, and this liberation appears to us in the light of the "speculative Good Friday" (*spekulativen Karfreitag*): plainly spoken, the palingenetic power that transfigures manifesting in what we perceive as *Aufhebung* is nothing else but the Passion of Christ. (Bourgeois, 2001, pp. 222-225) Moreover, as Bernard Bourgeois shows, since the Hegelian structure of thought implies that Being becomes, Essence produces and Concept creates, the final moment of the absolute knowing culminates in the freedom that Concept offers as the moment of creation; but this freedom is accomplished by the fulfillment of the Christological Incarnation, Passion and Resurrection: only this absolute negativity, death of God on the Cross, the supreme Sacrifice brings about the realization of creature's creative freedom. (Bourgeois, 2001, pp. 227-228)

But there are other references where Hegel makes the same identification between the speculative and the Christian soteriology.

The *Phenomenology's* last sentences explicitly reveals the entire play of the speculative phenomenological undertake as the realization of absolute knowing which is the spirit knowing itself as spirit through the recollection of the realm of the spirits which opens itself as relinquishing spirit after spirit in the revelation of the depth itself. Thus, the Phenomenology is nothing short than the revelation of the Abyss. This revelation of the Abyss, though, must pass through this moment of negativity of itself which gives it its effectiveness without which it would be lifeless and alone. And this moment of negativity is developed as phenomenology which in essence is, the last sentence tells us, the "the recollection and the Golgotha of absolute

spirit" (*die Erinnerung und die Schädelstätte des absoluten Geistes*). (Hegel, 1970 [1807] W3; Hegel, 2018 [1807])

The famous fragment on love (Hegel, 1971 [1797/1798], W1, pp. 244-250; Hegel, 1975 [1795], pp. 302-308) is also illuminating. Love excludes all oppositions, in contrast with understanding which leaves the manifolds in their oppositions or to reason which always needs determined elements to operate and because of this always needs to distinguish between different determinations. Love neither restricts, nor is restricted, it is not finite. And

> ...finally, love completely destroys objectivity and thereby annuls
> and transcends reflection, deprives man's opposite of all foreign
> character, and discovers life itself without any further defect.
> In love the separate does still remain, but as something united
> and no longer as something separate; life [in the subject] senses
> life [in the object]. (Hegel, 1975 [1795], p. 305)

Love is, then, the foundation of the absolute identity that recollects itself from absolute negativity and opposition, the fundamental cause for the Incarnation and the Passion of Golgotha which gave us the existential soteriology and which also revealed itself in the Hegelian specularity.

But, in order to reveal this absolute identity, the absolute negativity must be invested in the thought structure in the form of the speculative proposition. What is the speculative proposition? First, Hegel makes us know, in a well-known fragment, what it is not:

> The need to represent the absolute as *subject* has helped
> itself to such propositions as "God is the eternal," or "God is
> the moral order of the world," or "God is love," etc. In such
> propositions, the true is directly posited as subject, but it is not
> presented as the movement of reflection-taking-an-inward-turn.
> (Hegel, 2018 [1807], pp. 14-15)

The "reflection-taking-an-inward-turn" (*des sich in sich selbst Reflektierens dargestellt*) is precisely the organic and lively detailed development that the concept needs in order to produce in the thought the turning inward, the reflection, the coincidence with itself that it needs in order to make effective, real its identity with its being in such a way that it may surpass its ontic position towards an ontological contemplation of the truth.

> One proposition of that sort begins with the word "*God*." On its own, this is a meaningless sound, a mere name. It is only the predicate that says *what the name* is and is its fulfillment and its meaning. The empty beginning becomes actual knowledge only at the end of the proposition. To that extent, one cannot simply pass over in silence the reason why one cannot speak solely of the eternal, the moral order of the world, etc., or, as the ancients did, of pure concepts, of being, of the one, etc., or, of what the meaning is, without appending the meaningless sound as well. (Hegel, 2018 [1807], p. 15)

Saying it differently, the language has the property of abbreviating and of replacing the Real of what it names. A true language must bring us the closest to the Real that it tries to depict and, as such, it should conjure the very essence of what it stands for in such a way as to become one with it. But there is an abysmal gap between our words and the Real, a gap that leaves our plain words powerless in the face of such negativity. Thus, in order for the words to aim if not to invoke their identity with their object, they must assume the abyss as to let it manifest itself as the source of the unity which keeps apart, but also together, the two sides of the Real, word and object. If the language does not assume this gap, if it does not let itself be transfixed and transmutated by this negativity, by the groundless void that calls it from behind the empty, meaningless sounds of the plain and immediate words, then it will remain impotent in facing the task of mediating and manifesting its authentic meaning.

> However, the use of this word only indicates that it is neither
> a being nor an essence nor a universal per se which is posited;
> what is posited is what is reflected into itself, a subject. Yet, at
> the same time, this is something only anticipated. The subject
> is accepted as a fixed point on which the predicates are attached
> for their support through a movement belonging to what it is
> that can be said to know this subject and which itself is also not
> to be viewed as belonging to the point itself, but it is solely
> through this movement that the content would be portrayed as
> the subject. (Hegel, 2018 [1807], p. 15)

Without letting itself being pierced by the absolute negativity of its internal true reference, negativity which is the result of its own immediacy and lack of development, language will never pierce itself too the meaning that it should convey. The inflexible point of reference of a blind and opaque subject would block meaning instead of transmitting it because its empty immediate reference would never let it through since it has no aperture for it; in other words, it does not open itself to its own alterity. Without putting every word uttered in relation with the abyss, what is spoke has little if no meaning at all.

> Because of the way this movement is constituted, it cannot
> belong to the point, but after the point has been presupposed,
> this movement cannot be constituted in any other way, and it
> can only be external. Thus, not only is the former anticipation
> that the absolute is subject not the actuality of this concept, but
> it even makes that actuality impossible, for it posits the concept
> as a point wholly at rest, whereas the concept is self-movement.
> (Hegel, 2018 [1807], p. 15)

The result of this lack of relation of the spoken word with the abyss, while it superficially pretends to invoke it, is that the uttered word remains empty, devoid of the Real that it unconsciously claims to refer, in a dead abstractedness of a thoughtless declaration that turns against itself as

impotent and makes impossible any effective relation with the authenticity of the element that it pretends to concern. That is why in the next paragraph Hegel speaks of system and of science as the only appropriate and authentic methods of the true knowing: what he means is not a structure of formal deducible propositions, but the interwoven multiplicity of a unified contemplation where the passing from one concept to the other is as compelling as could be the passing in a mathematical demonstration, but with the amendment that there wouldn't have any formal elements exhibited since every step of the system is an exposé of the continuous movement of the pure essentialities (*reinen Wesenheiten*), (Hegel, 1970 [1807] W3, p. 37; Hegel, 2018 [1807], p. 22) between the word and the abyss, movement which culminates in reflectively illuminating the hetero-tautologies and the abysmal relations and relativities of the moments and turns of the speculative joints. In other words, the Hegelian system will not be one of management of the logistic of arguments and demonstrations; but the phenomenological and metaphysical exhibition of the realm of the *Spirit* who is the *true subject*, *object* and *method* of the system. In fact, the *Spirit* is the system as much as he is the subject. (Hegel, 1970 [1807] W3, p. 28; Hegel, 2018 [1807], p. 16) And that, because

> …spirit has made its existence equal to its essence. Spirit is an object to itself in the way that it is, and the abstract element of immediacy and the separation between knowing and truth is overcome. (Hegel, 2018 [1807], p. 23)

In *Spirit* the absolute negativity or separation between the I and the substance are overcome and their one-sidedness and incompleteness is overcome also and manifested in the movement of the speculative identity in its own negation which reflects the truth of the substance as subject reflected in itself and the subject as substance mediated in itself:

> The inequality which takes place in consciousness between the I and the substance which is its object is their difference,

> the *negative* itself. It can be viewed as the *defect* of the two, but it is their very soul or is what moves them. This is why certain ancients conceived of the *void* as what moved things in conceiving of what moves things as the *negative*, but they did not yet grasp this negative as the self.—However much this negative now initially appears as the inequality between the I and the object, still it is just as much the inequality of the substance with itself. What seems to take place outside of the substance, to be an activity directed against it, is its own doing, and substance shows that it is essentially subject. (Hegel, 2018 [1807], p. 23)

In all other instances where Hegel has exposed the speculative we obtain the same essence of this movement of knowing. In the last fragment from the *Phenomenology's* **Preface** where he discusses in more detail how the speculative propositions truly operate, (Hegel, 1970 [1807] W3, pp. 58-62; Hegel, 2018 [1807], pp. 38-41) the essence of the speculative endeavor is that it must comprise, all at the same time, subject, predicate, the presence of the subject in the predicate, the presence of the predicate in the subject and their mutual relation of passing one into the other. The proposition, then, is not a mere external interaction between two separate elements, but a continuous passing of one element into the other and their revelation of the new identity which the passing given as *Aufhebung* has opened as both condition and result of the entire movement.

The interaction between *setzende Reflexion*, *posited Reflection*, and *äußere Reflexion*, *external Reflection*, is also another place for the revealing subject as point of self-differing of the pure difference. As Peter Rohs shows (Rohs, 1972, p. 66), the *unsayable* difference between Being and Nothing inscribes itself in the pure Nothing that *setzende Reflexion* has as point of departure. This Nothing is self-dividing immediacy, but this self-division is not related to another: it does not pertain to self-identical, but as self-negating in the pure immediacy of reflection in itself, but without any self, like a *Ding an Sich* that immediately disappears at the very moment of its

own institution by an unconscious movement of a self-negating non-substrate. But this would be the very subject itself.

As we see, the Heideggerian accusation that Hegel would completely pass into oblivion the issue of the *unthought* (*Ungedachten*) (Mabille, 2004, pp. 26-36) and that Hegel would aim to reduce identity to a direct and plain relation between thought or language and object becomes untenable. After the brief analysis we hereby exposed, precisely the opposite appears to be true. If we were to make a fugitive assessment of comparation between what is the Hegelian subject—"empirical bearer of Logos" (Merleau-Ponty, 1964, p. 156)—who is realizing the speculative endeavor versus what Heidegger pretends it to be, we could say that Hegel's *Spirit* is the Aristotelian οὐσία in its originary presence brought into the absolute identity with itself through the Abyss of its own negativity. And that the *Spirit* as subject is also the Concept, which is the life of the subject who develops through all the *Erinnerung* of the figures of the *Phenomenology...*, just as much as he is also the subject of the categories of the *Logic*; and this development of the Concept as *Spirit* (Pannenberg, 2004 [1993] III, p. 168) authentically inscribes him also into history through time since in Hegelian doctrine the Concept is also assimilated to *time* (Bourgeois, 2000, pp. 378-379); but it is not the time of assimilation of the multiplicity to the tautology of a false ontological *Difference*, as Heidegger thought. But it is the time of the true experience of the *Spirit* through the real alterity of his harsh and implacable negative, a time that the subject assumes as his own life: *subject, concept, time, life*— become the instances who contain in themselves the true Essence of the speculative content and who expose themselves as such within the play of the absolute identity in its absolute negative, ontologically, (Bourgeois, 1995, pp. 230-232) and accomplish the unity between the empirical subject and the knowing or the transcendental one (Vetö, 2000, pp. 30-33), after having assumed the negativity of the separation from God and of our finitude. (Pannenberg, 2004 [1991] I, pp. 172-173)

Why should Being be the Same with Thinking?

In one of his already classic texts, *Introduction to Metaphysics*, Heidegger poses the fundamental question: why should there rather be something instead of nothing? (Heidegger, 2000 [1953], pp. 1-54) This question is not one of a multiplicity of variants that could be used in order to begin philosophizing, but, according to its author: "is first in rank for us as the broadest, as the deepest, and finally as the most originary question". (Heidegger, 2000 [1953], p. 2)

Talking about primary, originary Nothing is, thus, the first task of philosophy instead of departing from the immediate treatment of it as purely and simply lacking any concern and immediately departing from Being. In this we may see Heidegger's criticism not only of Hegel, but of the entire tradition of metaphysics that has occupied the tradition of Western thinking. However, Heidegger seems to ignore that Hegel is treating also Nothing in his *Science of Logic* by giving it equal ontological footing in the ontological departure. In this respect, it should be evident that Hegel does not make an onto-theo-logy where there would not be any question of the originary Nothing and where Nothing would be but a deficiency that is relegated to be excluded under the pretended influence of Christian dogmatics only to be dominated by a positive and affirmative God. Moreover, the Nothing is itself susceptible of being understood in many ways and there certainly are numerous occurrences of it in the apophatic theology, even though it cannot be understood as a privative occurrence. (Brito, 1977, p. 90; Brito, 1979, pp. 61-62, 93-97; Mabille, 2004, p. 119) In this respect, our present work will employ an analysis of this issue where we shall try to make the best use of the dynamics of the two concepts, Being and Nothing.

Here is a view upon this apparent conflict between Hegel and Heidegger as expressed by late Professor Bernard Mabille:

Au lieu d'accéder à la « métaphysique authentique » par l'angoisse et la « nuit claire du néant », autrement dit, au lieu d'accomplir le dépassement de l'étant qui est le véritable sens du « méta » de « métaphysique », le texte de 1929 décrit la métaphysique inauthentique (nommé bientôt onto-théologique) qui, sous l'influence de la dogmatique chrétienne, réduit le néant à une simple absence ou déficience que la reconduction à un Dieu-fondement ou cause doit combler.

(…)

En 1927-1928, en 1949 et en 1957, la recherche de l'être de l'étant (prise comme synonyme d'étantité) désigne le projet d'ensemble de la métaphysique qui se met en œuvre par la question ontologique du sens de l'őν ἦ őν et se prolonge (et se perd en s'accomplissant) par la détermination d'un étant fondateur de tout étant ou du tout de l'étant. Dans cette perspective, on dira que cette première approche du concept d'onto-théologie constitue la métaphysique non seulement comme dimorphie mais comme relation en quelque sorte déceptive du premier motif au second. Pour le dire cavalièrement, il semble qu'en métaphysique la théologie soit une mauvaise réponse à une bonne question ontologique. Dès la première caractérisation de la *Verfassung*, le thème de la fondation en raison (*Begründung*) et, de façon générale, la référence au *Grund* est signe de l'échec de l'onto-théologie. C'est en ce sens que la quatrième phrase de l'alinéa 30, que nous lisions à l'instant, montre l'être de l'étant d'avance pensé, c'est-à-dire toujours déjà orienté et réduit à un « fond fondateur ». La métaphysique naît portée par une authentique interrogation sur l'être de l'étant et s'enferre dans une inauthentique obsession de fondation (que seule la référence au logos va permettre de comprendre pleinement). (Mabille, 2004, pp. 119, 122)

Heidegger's problem with traditional metaphysics appears as the objection that the entire metaphysical enterprise is founded on the *analogy*

that makes the grounding of thought in relation to what determined being (*Seiende*, étant) would conceive about the Origin in accord to its own preconceptions: thus, metaphysically and theologically Being is obtained by relating the Origin to the ground and reasonable logic of the *Dasein* such that, in essence, a being comes to be seen as supreme among beings and ultimately as arbitrary identical with pure and originary Being. (Heidegger, 1978 [1928], pp. 35-36, 153-154; Heidegger, 1984 [1978], pp. 27-28, 123-124; Watson, 1988, pp. 463-465; Crowell, 2020, pp. 17-18) Anthropologization is then Heidegger's objection to metaphysics; Western thought has given itself decisively to the system of analogy between *Seiende* and *Sein*, thus erasing into oblivion the question of the ontological difference and encapsulating the entire matter of thinking into the structure of rationality.

In order to go beyond metaphysical anthropologization, metaphysics should put aside any pretense of rationality and, as such, of Ground. The Ground should be seen as open, not as something achieved or made visible or constituted. But in Hegel Ground is determined determinateness which is negated in this determinateness and as such it is the undetermined that determines itself:

> In determining itself as ground, essence determines itself as the not-determined, and only the sublating of its being determined is its determining. – Essence, in thus being determined as self-sublating, does not proceed from an other but is, in its negativity, identical with itself. (Hegel, 2010 [1832], p. 386)

But as such, the charge that Hegel's ground would be the rational immediacy that would obliterate the question of the *Ungedachten* and would be an obstacle to the true contemplation of Ground as Abyss becomes untenable. Hegel's ground is not determined in itself even if it presents for formal or representational thinking under the guise of the determinations of reflection. His ground is not some sort of recoil device of thinking where

thoughts arrive only to be rebound into the same determinations after having put themselves to the test of the *Dasein*.

As Heidegger remarks, (Heidegger, 1984 [1978], p. 35) in Aristotle and Leibniz truth comes from the objectivity of the truth relation between subject and predicate understood as coinciding relation of both logic and ontology. But in the case of Descartes the position changes since there appears a second subject, that of the "I" who may differ from what would be constituted or presented as direct truth by the objective analytical relation of the logical-ontic subject to the logical-ontic predicate and which is an issue of content of the judgment, not an issue of a personal subject's act of volition:

> Descartes seeks the essence of judgment in a wholly different direction than did Aristotle or, later, Leibniz. According to Descartes, judging is not a merely mental process, a connecting of notions. Rather it is the knowing subject's assumption of a position toward these mental contents. *Iudicare*, to judge, is *assensionem praebere*, to give assent, to a relation between notions, *assentiri, credere, sibi ipsi affirmare* [to assent, to believe, to affirm to oneself]. The contrast here between affirmation and denial, acknowledgment and rejection, does not correspond to the division of judgments into affirming and denying, positive and negative judgments. For Descartes this conception of judgment is connected most intimately with the way in which he lays the foundations of first philosophy as such, with the suspension of assent, with the attitude of doubt toward previous knowledge. (Heidegger, 1984 [1978], p. 35)

So, the subject as person gives a different position towards truth through his continuous personal doubt which is the expression of its detachment from the ontic position. (Descartes, 1985, pp. 122-131; Descartes, 1984, pp. 12-15) In this regard, Descartes describes judgment as an act of volition, rather than an act of knowledge. As such, Descartes does not depart from

the ontological difference and from the evidence of a negative thought in itself. (Mabille, 2004, p. 40) He rather treats negativity as ontic, thus dependent on the intentional subject who finds himself in the illusion of ontological stability and, as such, as the true criterion of truth since he conceives no transcendental variation towards his own *dubito*. The entire negativity of his position comes from outside, the subject in himself does not thematize his own demise in his transcendental certitude. And this is due to the rationalist assumption that the identity principle is homogenous and tautological, hence his entire thought process is submitted to the thinking of the *Vorstellung*, the representation where subject and object are still separated from one another. (Hegel, 1895, III, p. 8; Biard, et al., 1981, pp. 9-11; Mabille, 2004, pp. 56-57) If Descartes would have been truly rigorous in his *cogito*, he would have had to confront the doubt risen in the issue of the principle of identity itself and he would have had to discuss the very nature of the originary and undetermined identity. But the result of the absolute identity could not have been ascertained by a determined subject anymore and it could not have been treated as a formal identity. Descartes does not assume truly the negative; he sees the negative as an element that should be avoided at all costs, thus his need to ascertain everything through a fundamental subjective procedure of validation that does nothing more but to encapsulate the subject in his isolate position of *Dasein*. But certitude is not the same as truth. (Biard, et al., 1981, pp. 11-13) Any truth, as we mentioned above, speculation finds it by taking it through the negative of its immediate evidence: this negative is not the comparing of the determined being with other determined beings, but the contradiction that the being encounters by the very definition it holds and then the negativity that reveals as gap between the opposite determinations that negativity simultaneously separates and contains. By this treatment the horizon of the *Aufhebung* can be kindled and the transfiguration process of the concepts may be engaged.

In the entire development the immediacy of Being is passed into the negative and unfolds as Essence. Thus, the truth and the concepts of the process

are seen in their very present determinations as effective elements in the objects that are considered. Hegel's concepts are no Platonic ideas that would reside in an ontological separate realm beyond that of the concrete existence of *Dasein*. In fact, the very existence is the unfolding of the concepts themselves as such, in the speculative mediation of the *Aufhebung*.

Being illuminates all phenomenal manifestation and thus all phenomenal manifestation supposes something prior to it. As philosophy in general and speculative logic especially endeavors to account for the ground of phenomenality, the appropriate next step is to question the difference between phenomenality and its ground.

Hegel's logical answer (as the *Science of Logic* presents it) was, at a first glance, in accordance with that of the old metaphysics: the primordial difference between the two is that the ground is *immediate* as it is unbegun origin, whereas phenomenality is *mediated* and a result since it has a beginning—thus, any consistent philosophical enquiry cannot proceed but through the presuppositionless immediacy: Being revealed in itself as the ontological pure and abstract unbegun beginning. In fact, Hegel is quick to specify

> ...that *there is* nothing in heaven or nature or spirit or anywhere else that does not contain just as much immediacy as mediation, so that both these determinations prove to be *unseparated* and *inseparable* and the opposition between them nothing real. (Hegel, 2010 [1832], p. 46)

Hegel's phenomenological answer,[21] on the other hand, though resting on the same solution, has a different methodology (Hegel, 2018 [1807]) for expressing it. Instead of beginning with the reduction of every instance of mediation to immediacy and of immediately finding that immediacy posits

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[21] We understand phenomenology in the sense of the *Phenomenology of the Spirit*, not in that of the Husserlian tradition.

itself as mediation and mediation as immediacy, Hegel's *Phenomenology…* opens up and unfolds as a speculative propaedeutics which teaches the subject how to overcome the one-sided suppositions of formal and natural thought.

In both instances, the logical and the phenomenological, the speculative reveals a fundamental departure from every method of philosophical exposition that has been formulated up to author's times—as a concrete prerequisite of the absolute difference towards any presupposition. As it has been shown before (Biard, et al., 1981, pp. 9-13; Opiela, 1983, pp. 18-25; Soual, 2000, pp. 13-16), the speculative turn of thought implies that the classical distinction between form and content of knowledge, as well as the distinction of the methodology from content and form employed in natural discourse can no longer be taken as a given. If there is something which is naturally given for the formal thought, it is precisely the regime of thought of *immediate representation*.—At this point an important difference is to be made and shall be discussed in the following chapters between the immediate representation and the speculative and archetypical representation, respectively. After initially severely critiquing and dismissing the regime of thought articulated on the structure of representational thought especially in the *Phenomenology…*, Hegel seems to have a change of position once that he makes amends to his *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*, particularly since 1827, where he considers that representation is the pivotal point of the initial articulation of knowledge and that it is resumed in the speculative frame of thought which does nothing but to explicit the concepts and images present in representation investing them in the inner turn of the speculative tension of the totality of the structured and dynamic oppositions.[22]

This is the reason for which the speculative thought is not making the same reduction of determined or phenomenal realities as Cartesian or Husserlian phenomenology does.

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[22] See below ch. B., I., 3.-5., II., 1.-2. of the present work.

As it is well known, Husserl's own phenomenology departed from the same premise of absolute beginning as radical grounding of all philosophical endeavors, thus, by rejecting any prior supposition (Husserl, 1982 [1931], pp. 4-9).

Despite the entire Husserlian demarche of *epoché* and eidetic reduction which devised the demise of naïve philosophy through the first act of fundamental skepticism (Smith, 2003, p. 6) and the overtaking of contingent knowledge through the eidetic variation, not only the two movements were not ultimately coupled, but they presumed that the primary act of phenomenal apprehension could be purified of any fundamental intentionality (or symbolic structures, to use the Lacanian terminology) through *insight* (*Einsicht*) (Sokolowski, 1999, pp. 177-184; Smith, 2003, p. 6) in order to acquire immediate access to the originary encounter between intuition and object—by having the impression that once the syntax of language removed, the content would reveal itself in all its essential phenomenality (Sokolowski, 1999, pp. 168-169).

Thus, in Husserlian phenomenology *immediate representation* is not speculatively overcome, to speak in Hegelian terms, since the entire process of Husserlian (and Cartesian) phenomenological reduction does not retrospectively affect the contemplative or analytical endeavor as the results obtained through the phenomenological reduction are investigated by the same fundamentally natural procedures of thought which have been used before the reduction since *evidence* (*Evidenz*) is postulated by Husserl as beyond logic itself at the very moment where Husserl supposes precisely the logical in order to make this postulate itself and, thus, *evidence* apprehendable:

> We must not say at this point: "Why bother with such investigations and ascertainments? They obviously belong to the general theory of science, to logic, which must of course be applied both now and later." On the contrary, we must guard ourselves against just this matter-of-course opinion. Let us

> emphasize what we said against Descartes: Like every other already-given science, logic is deprived of acceptance by the universal overthrow. Everything that makes a philosophical beginning possible we must first acquire by ourselves. Whether, later on, a genuine science similar to traditional logic will accrue to us is an eventuality about which we can at present know nothing.

> By this / preliminary work, here roughly indicated rather than done explicitly, we have gained a measure of clarity sufficient to let us fix, for our whole further procedure, a *first methodological principle*. It is plain that I, as someone beginning philosophically, since I am striving toward the presumptive end, genuine science, must neither make nor go on accepting any judgment as scientific *that I have not derived from evidence*, from "experiences" in which the affairs and affair-complexes in question are present to me as "*they themselves*". (Husserl, 1982 [1931], p. 13)

The only aspect of knowledge which changes is that of new determinations which are obtained and, then, inscribed in a transcendental structure of knowing and of being. But this structure, although ontologically differentiated from the natural ones, is presented and articulated through the same fundamentally natural discourse in which identity and difference are not sublated but understood as being the same as in natural thought. (Hegel, 2018 [1807], p. 27) Though, as Merleau-Ponty observed, one result that situated Husserl in Hegel's proximity was the discovery, through the eidetic reduction, of the circular movement of the self: the "re-entering self" is elicited by the "going-outside self", double counterpoint that is how Hegel defined the Absolute. (Merleau-Ponty, 1964, p. 161)

As Henri Maldiney puts it (Maldiney, 1973, pp. 256-262), the mediation that Hegel finds as already present within the very immediacy of the *This* (Hegel, 2018 [1807], pp. 61-62) is fundamentally derived from the priority of the immediacy itself as pre-given by relation to every mediation. Although,

in the first instance of thought Maldiney's position is correct, the French philosopher fails to perceive that this position is immediately turned in itself as its own opposite. With the speculative turn, we have as immediately given the self-division of immediacy:

> Now, as a result the stable being of existence is self-equality or the pure abstraction, is the abstraction of itself from itself, or it is itself its own inequality with itself and its own dissolution— its own inwardness and withdrawal into itself—its coming-to-be. (Hegel, 2018 [1807], p. 34)

And this self-division is reflected in itself as the very essence of immediacy itself. Therefore, the only problem that needs to be investigated here is the problem of mediation: how is mediation to be understood, fundamentally, in Hegelian terms? Is mediation the immediate advent of determinacy within the indeterminate essence of immediacy? Or Hegel is inclined to also admit an indeterminate absolute mediation?

In Lacanian terminology, Maldiney speaks of the suppression of the Real as the institution of the Symbolic takes place as universal negation of the *This* (*Ceci*). This negation is treated as a refuse of immediacy.

However, Maldiney does not seem to apprehend that Absolute and Pure Immediacy self-differentiates itself in and by its own self immediate undifferentiation. As Hegel expresses it:

> The immediate existence of spirit, *consciousness*, has two moments, namely, knowing and the objectivity which is negative to knowing. While spirit develops itself in this element and explicates its moments therein, still this opposition corresponds to these moments, and they all come on the scene as shapes of consciousness. The science of this path is the science of the *experience* consciousness goes through. Substance is considered in the way that it and its movement are the objects of consciousness. Consciousness knows and comprehends nothing

> but what is in its experience, for what is in experience is just
> spiritual substance, namely, as the *object* of its own self. However,
> spirit becomes the object, for it is this movement of becoming
> an *other* to *itself*, which is to say, of becoming an *object* to *its*
> *own self* and of sublating this otherness. And experience is the
> name of this very movement in which the immediate, the non-
> experienced, i.e., the abstract (whether the abstract is that of
> sensuous being or of "a simple" which has only been thought
> about) alienates itself and then comes round to itself from out
> of this alienation. It is only at that point that, as a property of
> consciousness, the immediate is exhibited in its actuality and in
> its truth. (Hegel, 2018 [1807], pp. 22-23)

Moreover, Maldiney only speaks of the effects of the institution of the Symbolic for the determinate being (*l'étant*), and does not seem to be aware of the absolute necessity for the Real to be immediately differentiated within itself as pure immediacy; nor of the fact that through differentiation only is the Real properly itself, without it the Real only being not even nothing (put pure inscrutable and sealed off immediacy) and that it would never even become object of discourse without being differentiated (Hegel, 2010 [1832], pp. 341-344; Opiela, 1983, pp. 113-121; Biard, et al., 1983, pp. 33-38); and that the Real reveals itself as Real only in and through the self-differentiation of its own immediation as ideality, that is, as Symbolic. Therefore, the Real is itself as properly Real only when it is absolutely self-alterated in its own alterity as Symbolic. But this amounts as to saying that absolute self-negation of the absolute Immediacy, of the absolute Real, is, in fact, absolute Affirmation as revelation of the pure and immediate coincidence of the pure immediacy with itself as absolute negation (Hegel, 2018 [1807], pp. 346-348). If negation is the rupture that denies the pure coincidence or identity of the Origin with itself, then revealing that, in fact, this negation is the confirmation of its own alterity, therefore confirmation of the origin's absolute immediacy through its absolute passing as immediate Real, therefore,

as acceptance of its own remnance-in-the-passing, as embracing of its own death, then the absolute coincidence of absolute Immediacy with absolute Mediation in the origin of immediacy and of mediation themselves is revealed. Immediacy reveals itself as being its own origin and act of absolute and immediate mediation. Or, that which brings us to *Essence* (*Wesen*).

The Speculative Method

In knowledge transmission, it always occurred since Plato's epistemology (*Meno*, 80d) (Plato, 1997, pp. 879-880) the fundamental paradox of the *anamnesis*: how can the searcher know what to look for or what he or she is to understand if that is not already given as known to him or her or, if one comes across what he or she should find how is one to recognize it if that is not already known to him or her? Or, speaking about one has to find, what is that which one would set up as a target of one's search if that precisely is what one already has to come to know? This lack of pure beginning of knowledge is also the root for the lack of motivation that the searcher experiences. Motivation is linked to desire and desire corresponds inside what was called the tripartite structure of the human subject— which comprises the Real, the Symbolic and the Imaginary (Lacan, 2001, pp. 323-328)—to the imagination, both as a part of the Symbolic and as the Imaginary itself. But motivation and desire are anticipations of that which the subject is devising as his or her own setting of fundamental purpose. They open the horizon of subjective representations as innate possibilities of the concept. But these anticipations do not already apprehend the objects that they aim at. The paradoxical impossibility of the beginning of knowledge offers only the blockage between either of two alternatives: either one has to begin knowing, but how does one come to even formulate that knowing is the imperative and how would one find the object of his or her knowing if one does not know the object that one should have an aim at?—Either one already knows what he or she is supposed to come to

know, but then why should one still search his or her knowledge if that knowledge is already in his or her possession?—

The Platonic (or Socratic) answer was the doctrine of *anamnesis* (*Phaedo*, 66b-d; *Meno*, 85e-86c) (Plato, 1997, pp. 57-58; 886) which would supply the middle term required in order to make possible the passing between the two opposites. By postulating that the human subject was prone to have his memory raveled, the Platonic doctrine postulated occurrence of the potentiality that would bring into being an actual negative that was supposed to make possible for the opposites to encounter or even to overlap each other and thus to make possible the synthesis that would attain the real act of acquiring knowledge.

The imagination and the memory would be the main faculties that would be directly summoned for the process of *anamnesis* to take place and those two faculties would manifest the entire thrust that desire and the motivation claim for the imperative goal of self-achievement that the human subject strives to accomplish once that the potentiality of *anamnesis* has gained man's intention. Once that this potentiality has been activated, the human subject experiences the profound need to realize within their own self the work of apprehending the fundamental meanings of existence (Hegel, 2018 [1807], pp. 5-6). The process of thought is the main stage where this need is to be attained, therefore the intellect is fundamentally challenged by the meanings that are vehiculated. But meanings are dependent on each other and the intellect is menaced by the circular movement of one's incessant passing from one meaning to its blind presumptions and back or by one's immediately evanescent lack of ground for acquiring them (Hegel, 2018 [1807], pp. 7-9). This unremitting move may come to its closure only when the subject achieves the complete cut of his chain of thought in order to reach the ultimate meaning that pervades all the world and system of the signifier. But this ultimate meaning and undetermined meaning cannot be born by the determined subject unless he is ready to be appropriated by

the undetermined, thus if one is not ready to abandon oneself to the death of all determined meaning. But the death of all determined meaning is the death of the signifier and the pure openness of the subject towards the termination of nothingness. (Hegel, 2018 [1807], pp. 12-13)

The goal of thinking is never to be realized but by revealing this inner deep and essential signification of the encountered facts, their ultimate reduction as determined meanings that are to be constituted in the light of the absolute nullification, thus illumination, of the frontiers of knowledge, thus, of thought. Only then has the subject access to the opening of under-standing with a certain precision what one is supposed to engage into the acts of one's own defining existence. But this nullification is also the inaugural moment where the determined subject comes to terms with the contradiction that permeates his being and becoming. It bears the mark of the coincidence of the two moments of knowledge: the simultaneous presence and absence of the object of knowledge and of the actualized structure of knowledge. In this, the subject finds oneself as being caught within the contradiction of beginning and ending simultaneously the knowledge that has been promised to him through desire and motivation. But this contradiction is self-realizing as unity of already passed or closed identity and of priorly achieved openness of absolute difference of knowledge in itself. (Hegel, 2018 [1807], pp. 13-14)

This is the inner life of the subject and it is pulsating within the cleavage of this contradictory unity of the self-supposition of absence that opens the speculative method of thinking and of effectuating thought. The speculative is given as its own termination of circumscribing elements that abolish themselves within the very moment of the effectuation of their meaning. (Hegel, 2018 [1807], pp. 14-15; Hegel, 2010 [1832], pp. 81-82) Without this inner revelation of one's own suppressing-structuring fundamental thoughts, without thoughts being revealed in the most intimate ascent and emergent intention of the subject, the meaningfulness of the thought process is doomed

to fail and philosophy becomes impossible. Or, just as Heidegger formulates it:

> Every metaphysical question can only be put in such a way that the questioner as such is by his very questioning involved in the question.

> From this we derive the following pointer: metaphysical questioning has to be put as a whole and has always to be based on the essential situation of existence, which puts the question. (Heidegger, 1949 [1929], pp. 355-356)

The reason for the above mentioned failure is that whatever is significantly and meaningfully apprehended and internalized by a subject has this position only because it has an totalizing role in the goals and definition of oneself, becoming the nuclear element in the realization of one's own inner illuminating attainment. Such importance, beyond the mere individual inclinations that may or may not arise within the horizon of the subject, can be and not seldom is dictated by the objective contradictory structure of the meanings or facts that the subject relates to. However, in order to attain such position, that of a consequential element, the endeavor has to make the object or the medium of a meaningful experience that is to relate and ultimately to unite the contradictory elements in the subject's knowledge meaningful experience. (Hegel, 2018 [1807], pp. 16-18) Meaningful experiences are situations where the self of the subject is facing ultimate and complete, thus, contradictory transformative events that occur a challenging mirroring of the self, offering the place where a split presentation of the self needs the regaining of its inner transfigured identity as it has been modified by the element that has produced the split and compelled its need to regain its identity (Lacan, 1966, pp. 666-667, 793-827; Lustman, 1977).

In this regard two issues are capital: the identity that the self initially has, the split that occurs and the regain of the identity that also contains

the negative experience that has been acquiesced and dealt with in a positive and transcending manner. The position and relations that we acknowledge for these three elements and their ontological structures and roles is fundamental and gives the entire process of meaningful subjective experience its entire substance and engages it on a soteriological beneficial opening or it blocks it under the weight of confusing and false representations about the subject and his inner life (Hegel, 2018 [1807], pp. 4-6).

In this respect, the speculative method that was thought and put to work by Hegel in his philosophy might give us an operable solution for the engagement in meaningful experiences that are cardinal in the arousal of the desire for involvement in the process of molding the self. The Hegelian position in this respect is that in the fundamental experience of the subject the three elements or moments of the inner experience must find the place where they are revealed to coincide. Thus, if in every other human endeavor method and object or proper activity are different, in the realm of metaphysics the method which is the way of the subject or which constitutes the position of the subject, becomes the object or the system itself (Hegel, 2018 [1807], pp. 9-14; Opiela, 1983, pp. 39-51).

But, as we saw Hegel saying, this method must face its own negativity or mediation in order to attain its proper thrust and to realize its object which is itself. The negativity that is supposed here to be accepted as already engendered within the structure of the subject must match the challenge of the identity that is sought because the subjectivity cannot suppose as its own essence the pure continuity of existence: the subject is defined by its own inner fundamental absence as determinate instance. Or, as Lacan puts it:

> Bref quand Daniel Lagache vient au plus près à dire que
> « cette absence du sujet cohérent caractérise le mieux l'organi-
> sation du Ça », nous dirions que cette absence du sujet qui dans

le Ça inorganisé se produit quelque part, est la défense qu'on peut appeler naturelle (...).

Cette place est celle même où toute chose est appelée pour y être lavée de la faute, que cette place rend possible d'être la place d'une absence : c'est que toute chose puisse n'exister pas. Par cette matrice si simple de la première contradiction, être ou ne pas être, il ne suffit pas de constater que le jugement d'existence fonde la réalité, il faut articuler qu'il ne peut le faire qu'à la relever du porte-à-faux où il la reçoit d'un jugement d'attribution qui s'est déjà affirmé.

C'est la structure de cette place qui exige que le rien soit au principe de la création, et qui, promouvant comme essentielle dans notre expérience l'ignorance où est le sujet, du réel dont il reçoit sa condition, impose à la pensée psychanalytique d'être créationniste, entendons de ne se contenter d'aucune référence évolutionniste. Car l'expérience du désir où il lui faut se déployer, est celle même du manque à être par quoi tout étant pourrait n'être pas ou être autre, autrement dit est créé comme existant. (Lacan, 1966, pp. 666-667)

Thus, every instance of true and effective knowledge is organized within the subject by engaging the concepts of absolute beginning as absolute immediate identity that is immediately put in its own negation (*Übergehen in Anderes*), essential development of the inner structure of the elements involved as inner self-division and pure variation of its own pure reflected passing (*Wesen*) in order to culminate in the identity of all the given reflected variations as regain coincidence between the initially immediately reflected identity and its immediately negative variations in the Concept (*Begriff*) (Hegel, 2018 [1807], pp. 38-43; Léonard, 1974; Biard, et al., 1981, pp. 24-31).

Taking into account the imposed limits of the present study, we shall hereby confine ourselves to a short analysis of the initiation of immediate knowledge which is entirely engaged through the discussion around the

immediate and absolute Beginning and, thus, of immediate and absolute Being. Of great interest to us is the issue of immediate and absolute self-differentiation of Being: the origin of negativity or of discontinuity is the main immediate incision the appraisal of which is to be made if we are to open the trial of understanding the origin of what Lacan called the Symbolic and its signifier or their supporting living vehicle who is the subject as inner movement and need of achievement. And only in the result of this short investigation, the origin of the Symbolic offers us the perspective for understanding Hegel's appraisal of the determinations of reflection where the Hegelian identity exposition takes place.

B. Speculative ontology and antinomian theology. Metaphysical journey with the Hegelian method

III. Thinking the metaphysical
Absolute. The Real of the Negative

Preamble. Truth and premises

Any search for the truth sets out from premises located outside its discourse or the search itself. (Cusanus, 1979, pp. 31-33; Petry, 2006, p. 363) These premises are usually understood as being logical, and then the seeker will look for them in the field of logic or through its instruments. But logic itself also starts out with premises, and one can already find in them, either in passing or assumed, a few concepts often believed to be self-understood. (Hegel, 2010 [1832], pp. 23-27, 356-361; Dumitriu, 1977, pp. IX-XI; Priest, 1995, pp. 4-7). The principle of identity, to which any of the other three principles are reducible, already presupposes a synthesis or a continuum described in its formulation: an object A possesses a fundamentally unchanged state in which in coincides with itself—$A \equiv A$ or $A = A$. In this case, truth would already appear to have been found, as one would no longer have to search for the meaning of identity beyond itself, any other concept being itself inscribed in meaning through the coincidence already described by identity. Therefore, it would no longer appear necessary to search for premises beyond this point.—But when one tries to explain what *A* is and why it is in a particular way, and not another,[23] the presupposition one has just

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[23] Certainly, the source that requires no other outside search or that cannot be and should not be substantiated by something alien to it is the one designated through the term *Pure being*. However, before referring to it, we would like to make a few more general clarifications regarding the metaphysical discourse. And, essentially speaking, we will see that what has been developed concerning identity in itself is also reflected in the concept of Pure being. (Biard, et al., 1981, pp. 9-10; Hegel, 2010 [1832], pp. 58-66, 69-78, 386-392).

assumed is immediately contradicted: explaining *A* would actually mean looking for its premises beyond itself, thus describing it in terms alien to the self when in fact these alien terms would have to be identical to *A* in order to be able to describe it.[24] (Schelling, 1858, p. 360)

Moreover, one observes that *A's* identity is given only if there is a synthesis between *A* and itself, therefore being an intermediation or, in Hegel's words, something reflected. (Hegel, 2010 [1832], pp. 356-357)

—In a short presentation, we may mention here that this idea of the absolute and immediate self-division of a unity which opens a third position that envelops the same unity while dividing itself, had already been suggested by Heraclitus [*see* Hyppolitos: **Refutationes IX**, 9, 103, Porphyrios: **Quaestiones Homericae**, to The Ilyad XIV, 200 (Guthrie, 1965, pp. 435-459; Banu, 1979, pp. 357, 363) and actually explored by Plato in *Parmenides* through the logic of henology and the halving of the One [*Parmenides*, 139c-139e (Plato, 1997, pp. 373-374)]. As Plato's *Parmenides* demonstrates, the One cannot even be identical to itself, because this identity would presuppose the transformation of the One into something else, hence its halving:

> Because when something becomes identical with something,
> it does not also become one. [139d]

This conception was also examined by the sceptic school of thought (Sextus Empiricus, 2007, pp. 87-92), then by Neoplatonism (Damascius, 2002, pp. 1-20; Damascius, 2010, pp. 66-80; Plotinus, 2018, pp. 576-580, 598-604); traces of this analysis of identity mediation and, respectively, non-mediation, is especially found in Christianity in the development of Trinitarian dogmatics concerning the Divine nature and the paternal Hypostasis (Roberts, et al., 2001 [1885], pp. 446, 452, 460; St. Athanasius of Alexandria, 1995 [1892], pp. 313-316, 438; St. Gregory of Nazianzen, 1991, pp. 236, 245-261; St. Gregory of Nyssa, 1995 [1893], pp. 437, 448-449; Saint Maxime le Confesseur, 1994,

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[24] Based on this, one notes that the logical operation of *defining* is extremely paradoxical.

pp. 203-212; St. Basil of Caesarea, 2011, pp. 108-114; Saint Gregory Palamas, 1988, pp. 119, 125, 179), but also in the writings of St. Dionysius the Areopagite (Pseudo-Dionysius Areopagite, 1999, pp. 164-168, 171-172, 203-206). The analytic concept of non-mediation then passes into the Rhineland mysticism which already differentiates between *Gottheit* and *Gott* (Eckhart, 2009, pp. 30-32, 36), then into the speculative theology that precisely highlights the transcendence point between opposites (Cusanus, 1979), and it is further reprised by German idealism in Fichte's works (Fichte, 1987 [1801], p. 41), then by Hegel and Schelling (Schelling, 1858, p. 360; Schelling, 2007, pp. 20-24). Hegel already stated in the **Preface** to the *Phenomenology of Spirit* (Hegel, 2018 [1807], p. 34):

> Now, as a result the stable being of existence is self-equality
> or the pure abstraction, is the abstraction of itself from itself, or
> it is itself its own inequality with itself and its own dissolution—its
> own inwardness and withdrawal into itself—its coming-to-be.

In fact, the entire Preface of Hegel's work could be quoted in support of this idea. These ideas would later be proved in the *Science of Logic* (Hegel, 2010 [1832], pp. 356-358). Heidegger revisits this topic in his writings when he speaks about the problem of truth in terms of "original openness" and that of identity in terms of "original closeness" (Heidegger, 1969 [1957], pp. 23-41) after having said thirty years earlier that "understanding-of-being is transcendence" (*Seinsverständnis ist Transzendenz*). (Heidegger, 1978 [1928], p. 280; Heidegger, 1984 [1978], p. 217)

In Asian metaphysics, the principles of such a conception can be found in Taoism (Lao Tzu, 1989, pp. 51-55) and, in the most radical version, in Nagarjuna's militant Buddhism (Nāgārjuna, 1999 [1986], pp. 188-194; Nagarjuna, 2009, pp. 39-43, v. 026-042).—

However, identity is understood as the state in which there is only one element. Yet, the formulation of A≡A considers nonetheless A as something doubled, multiplied, in order to be able to express it as something

singular and unified. If one tried to explain identity in terms of pure non-mediation in which, in fact, no synthesis of multiples would be given through which A or any other term would be given as established, one would immediately reach the conclusion that such non-mediation results in the imminent suppression of A and any other term. In other words, through such reduction, one would be faced with naught, or pure nothingness (Hegel, 2010 [1832], pp. 50-53, 58-62, 66-78, 354-367).

It is not necessary to outline here the other considerations regarding the principle of non-contradiction, for instance, because it is already founded on terms that are mutually exclusive and thus already constitute different elements as such. This would only imply a re-engagement with and an increase in the number of difficulties one would encounter in analyzing the principle of identity, where—at first sight—the evident premise of any meaningful discourse runs into its opposite from the very start.[25]

A rigorous discourse either dominates its premises, or can explain them, or at least of anticipating their ramifications so that it cannot be caught unawares by them in a false stance. This is the reason why Hegel opens his

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[25] Here we anticipate the issue of the difference between **sophistry** and **speculative thought**. Aristotle recognised three types of thinkers: the philosopher, the dialectician, and the sophist (*Metaphysics*, **IV, 2, 1004b**) (Aristotle, 1998, pp. 83-84; Cornea, 2010, p. 57). The first was linked to the real and accepted the plurality of existences, such as the passing of the Principle in its determined occurrences. The second accepted only rational (determined) premises and conclusions, that is why he had difficulties in reaching actual knowledge and only managed to attempt knowledge. The third provided only an appearance of knowledge, because he started out from the premise of omnipresent opposition in the entire existence and its principles. The sophists were, in fact, those for whom the path to speculative knowledge would be open if they had respected and carried out the premises and conclusions they had initially claimed to assume. Considering that, however, the issue of negative knowledge was not yet formulated in its own terms and that this was not even possible at the time, the only ones who could have obtained effective knowledge were the naturalists, and the only ones who were able to obtain the metaphysical knowledge closest to speculative knowledge were the dialecticians.

introduction to the Science of Logic claiming a discourse started from zero premises (Hegel, 2010 [1832], pp. 45-52), not in the sense that he found himself in the position where the starting point of the discourse would completely escape him, but in the sense that the initial concepts, the truly irreducible ones, are the starting points of the discourse and are from the very beginning engaged in their own development or speculative self-differentiation (Hegel, 2010 [1832], pp. 45-53). Thus, none of the primary concepts of the *initium* can be transcribed or reduced to other concepts contained in them anymore, i.e., from which these would be composed, since being primary means being prior to any composition.

Starting a discourse with zero premises means bringing forth a discussion concerning the following concepts (Hegel, 2010 [1832], pp. 61-62): non-mediation, mediation, non-beginning, beginning, undifferentiated, differentiated, being, nothingness, identity, alterity, absolute, determined, infinite, finite, one, multiple.[26] But such an enterprise may not proceed in a

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[26] These pairs of concepts are not categories of the intellect, although they can be found in relationship to them. The categories are pure ideal forms of the apodictically reflected psychological faculty—the intellect—while the operating reflection in these pairs also reveals a relationship with the ontological content per se of the principles invoked. Despite the Kantian difference between the objects of intuition (ontic phenomena) and objects of the intellect (ideal concepts) (Kant, 2000 [1781], pp. 366-370)—where, for instance, the numerical identity of an intellectual object cannot be identical with the numerical plurality of ontic objects with similar properties that would put them in the same category and even though the repeated occurrences of the intellectual object in our psyche does also suggest such analogies, at least—we would be forced to concede that both concepts and phenomena correspond to primary, irreducible principle with common manifestation and structuring characteristics, principles that can be expressed through the conceptual pairs enumerated above. If one raised the Kantian objection that the *thing-in-itself* is impossible to know, that it is something we cannot comprehend, therefore an alterity in relation to the intellect of the determined subject, a "something else" in relation to the "something" of the intellect, then one would analytically and directly postulate the very concepts through which the thing-in-itself is given in its supra-phenomenal retraction: something, something else, non-mediation, mediation, undifferentiated, being, nothingness,

determined linearity since the zero-premises condition imposes the tautology of the point of departure: renouncing to any prerequisite given commits the opening of the first movement to its own instantiation before being admitted as such. (Hegel, 1969 [1832] W5, I, p. 123; Hegel, 2010 [1832], p. 89) But at this point, it is evident that this is a task that can be fulfilled by the speculative method that we addressed above. The speculative implies not only the settling of the initiation issue, but also an epistemological position that has to admit the real of the metaphysical position. But the metaphysical tradition has been criticized not only by Heidegger, but, beginning with Kantianism, also by Positivist philosophy and the Phenomenological school. The issue is not collateral to our interests in the Hegelian doctrine since the objections that have arisen against metaphysical enquiry have also tried to delegitimize Hegel's position, as we are to further suggest.

Thus, before proceeding to our speculative exposition, we need to clarify a few of the possible objections that could be raised against these preliminary considerations.

Criticist objections

The Kantian objection towards any speculative unity between intuition and thought, i.e., towards speculative thinking itself, is most evident in the difference it highlights between contradictory relationships in reality compared to the one in thought. Thus, Kant identifies four types of transcendental reflection concepts (Kant, 2000 [1781], pp. 366-370)—identity and diversity, concordance and discordance, interiority and exteriority, matter and form—that would regulate in general the modes of topological relations, i.e., of ultimate cognitive effectiveness, between intellect's schematism and sensibility.

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identity, one, multiple. The caveat that should be respected hereafter, however, is being aware of the discourse implications regarding a super-phenomenal horizon— for example, it can no longer be explained through the lens of formal logic.

Thus, he examines several types of amphibolies through which transcendental appearances are created—among them, the difference between sensitive singularity and intelligible universality/generality; but the most discernible is the one he employs to refer to the difference between the opposition of ideal elements versus the opposition of real elements.

Kant argues that when two forces oppose each other in the reality of being or existence, one of them suppresses the other or they mutually suppress each other and disappear from existence (A – B = 0 is the Kantian formula), sometimes causing destruction also within the environment in which they act. Conversely, he claims, in thinking, the opposition between two concepts do not lead to their actual ontological destruction in the mind of the one who conceives them or to the destruction of the mind itself (Kant, 2000 [1781], pp. 373-374). This is why Kant also rejects the ontological argument, because he considers that a Principle of absolute Totality must unify in itself that real contradiction of all objects and all real forces, a contradictory reunion that would undermine God Himself through His very substance which would then be absolutely composed and absolutely self-contradicting. Consequently, Kant postulates such an Instance only as a "transcendental ideal"—*Prototypon transcendentale* (Kant, 2000 [1781], pp. 553-559)—that has no other reality except, at most, a possible mass (meaning, only infinitely possible) of mutually opposed, even contradictory predicates (Kant, 2000 [1781], pp. 553-559),[27] therefore a **mass of possibilities**.

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[27] See also pp. 564-566 (Kant, 2000 [1781]). On p. 566, after Kant had previously tried to demonstrate that any concept referring to something indeterminate always has only one determined object, he explicitly stated that **existence, thus being** (symptomatically, Kant does not distinguish between them), **is always comprehended under all reality and it only lies in the concept of something possible**. Thus, pure Being, which is undetermined and, as such, uncircumscribed act, would only result from the determinacy of pure *potentia*, that is from the pure suspension between Being and Nothing. But what makes Being come into act from its suspension if its own coming-to-act *is itself* precisely?

Starting with the first chapters of the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, Hegel demonstrates that not only sensitivity itself is permeated by universality and generality, and that it makes no sense without an intelligible investment, but that, moreover (selective summary):

1. empirical objects themselves, even in a "resting state" are contradictory or antinomic units in themselves. Any real empirical object, being a unity of multiples, is therefore a unity in opposition; thus, a contradiction.—Such is the famous example Hegel provides in the second chapter of *Phenomenology*…, concerning the grain of salt that is singular, i.e., an exclusive unit, then an indifferently differentiating universality and, at the same time, a multiple of properties. All these modes speculatively cross into one another, complete with their attributes and content. (Hegel, 2018 [1807], p. 69 & sqq.)

2. thought is nothing more than movement and contradictory unity of opposites. Moreover, discerning contradictory empirical units (as has been shown) is only possible through the contradictory units at the intellect level, natural occurrences of the Spirit's antinomic unity.

3. the Spirit (and therefore, the intellect) does not succumb because of the intelligible implosion of the contradictions implicit in its structures (but also explicit), as it contains in itself **the absolute life of a transfigured negative** (*Aufhebung*). For the same reason, if the antinomic units of real elements contained within empirical objects do not succumb under the pressure of this internal multiplicity, that means that the same spiritual unifying principle also underlies that foundation of objects in the real realm (even though it is given in different modes than the ones of the subject's world). Consequently, in the world of the Spirit, all these oppositions and the destruction of these oppositions are real, but the world of the Spirit is stronger, because it is capable to overcome the hemorrhagic and external negative of the physical world through its own transfigured negativity.

4. in matters of morality, Hegel (Hegel, 2008, pp. 109-153, §105-§141) showed that the oppositions between concepts lead to the individual's immoral, asocial or criminal behavior.

5. conceptual oppositions and their speculative transposition in the real determine the history of humankind and the phenomenology of its Spirit.

Additionally, we could argue, against Kant (Kant, 2000 [1781], pp. 553-559), that there are clear cases in which oppositions between concepts lead to the real, ontological destruction of the structures of the spirit, in the case of psychological pathologies. Those who are mentally ill or alienated exhibit precisely the ruinous, catastrophic result of the collapse of inner spiritual coherence following contradictions stemming from the blockage of unconscious signifiers.

Given, reduction and Nothingness

A discourse that starts from zero premises is the one seeking the very absolute passage from non-mediation to mediation; from non-beginning to beginning; from undifferentiated to differentiated; from being to nothingness, or from nothingness to being; from identity to alterity; from one to multiple. The very act of "setting out" on this endeavor or of initiating a concept is from the outset engaged in the original beginning itself, thus making the discourse about the Beginning be effectively and singularly inscribed in its very Beginning (Hegel, 2018 [1807], pp. 16-22; Hegel, 2010 [1832], pp. 45-54; Schelling, 2007, pp. 46-48, 141-144, 193-195) so that thought itself ends up being caught in its own reduction and in its very noetic discourse of suppressing immediate representation and articulating the concept of its own apodicticity (Biard, et al., 1981, pp. 23-25; Gauthier, 1969, pp. 16-17; Opiela, 1983, pp. 17-39; Souche-Dagues, 1986, pp. 53-71). In other words, the distance between discourse and object, is erased in a non-mediated manner. The consequences of this fact can only be the aim of an initial unity between

the one uttering the discourse and the ultimate object of that discourse.[28] This is why any metaphysics operating with ultimate concepts reveals itself as bearing effectiveness.

This is not a simple unfolding of ideas in a void without a real referential—as Rudolf Carnap believed (Carnap, 1959). This would be, then, a direct consequence of the positivist presupposition according to which a significant content is always dependent on an empirical goal ("observational propositions"), and the logical structure is always purely formal (without problematizing the source and the effective substantiality of these syntactic forms). In other words, the entire speech is reduced to the referentiality to "something given" which is expressed in determinable, manifest, observable qualities or objects, and which, as "given", is considered the fix, irreducible point of referentiality.[29] In such a perspective, one

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[28] It has been argued that the Parmenidean identity between thought and being is an existential and ethical one (Cornea, 2010, pp. 46-54). Undoubtedly, the ontological identity between the subject and the object analytically leads to certain consequences for each subject. But the problem has to do more with singularizing the subject and the effective possibility of genuinely continuing to refer to the subject and object under the circumstances of such a unity without a difference, as the Eleatic School postulates.

[29] Popper's famous positivist criterion of "falsifiability" (Popper, 2002 [1935/1959], pp. 57-73) is incapable of legitimizing here the positivist option in any way—this, as any foundational optional, is also metaphysics, despite its anti-metaphysical methodological precautions. The incapacity is unequivocally evident in the attitude of the option itself.—Positivism demands that super-sensitive or non-empirical elements be subject to empirically verifiable rules. In other words, it denies them from the very start, before one can bring proof of what one claims: that the entire Real only consists of determinable, observable, manifest objects that can be empirically measured and that super-sensitive elements do not exist. Otherwise said, the empiricist-positivist methodology consists of a banal *petitio principia* sophism: it already presupposes what otherwise would have had to be priorly demonstrated, namely that empirical elements are the only ones that exist. This sophistic tactic is superficially masked, from a methodological perspective, through the arbitrary and purely circular imperative of only considering that which is empirical.—One can also observe the monistic nature of positivism. Any demonstration starts from a

completely ignores the ontological equivocation (not only the one referring to meaning) that underlies any apprehension of what is "given", even when one speaks from a scientific perspective. This is so for the simple reason that, when one refers to "the given", one will always be surprised to learn that what one believed at a certain point to be "given" is but another occurrence of a reducible determination. Otherwise said, the problem of what is "given", as the ultimate reference of any discursivity, essentially overlaps over the problem of the discourse starting from zero premises.

Consequently, the discourse that starts from zero premises actually starts from the absolute "given". But this absolute "given" can only be apprehended following a phenomenological, and even ontological reduction,[30] through which everything that can be de-composed, i.e., everything that can

concept of alterity that is at least possible: "something that can be different than what is *given*". But positivist empiricism from the very start supports methodological, rationally scientific doubt, dogmatically and exclusively refusing its own alterity. (Trif, 2011)

[30] The ontological reduction will not be real, namely it will be impossible for us to empirically cancel the ontological consistency (or even the ontic consistency, in another sense) of all things. We are only considering the mental experiment through which such a reduction is achieved, as further shown, precisely based on the subject's transcendental structure that adheres to the Real, and thus to Being, through intelligible mediation. The objection concerning the difference between the content of mental processes and the effective content of elements contained in an experience cannot have any effectiveness here. First, because we do not know a type of experiment other than the mystical one, through which such an experience is given; here, laboratory instruments are just as useless as our senses whose perception they try to deepen. Second, because, essentially, the contemplative rationality coincides with the speculative one as far as the essence to which they refer is concerned. Yet there is a difference in aim: the contemplative one refers to the unmediated living of the essence, while the speculative one, to the intelligible reflection of the essence.—[Plato: **Phaedo**, 79d; **Parmenides**, 132a-134d; **Philebus**, 58d; **The Republic**, 479a-513e; (Plato, 1997, pp. 70, 366-369, 448, 1106-1132; Plotinus, 2018, pp. 65-68: I.III (20). §3-6; Maximus Confessor, 1985, pp. 130: I, 8-9, 148-149: II, 2-5; St. Thomas Aquinas, 1917, pp. 94-119: Q. VIII-IX, 553-564: Q. XLV; Eckhart, 2009, pp. 566-574) (Cusanus, 2008a, pp. 85-113, 213-241) (Hegel, 2010 [1832], pp. 53-55) (Underhill, 1912 [1911], pp. 24-29, 114-148; König, 1999, pp. 79-132)].

be put under negation, (either by containing it, or by being limited by it—which ultimately proves to be the same thing) is negated by not being the authentic "given", because the "given" cannot be only a result. The "given" is simultaneously its own premise and its own result because nothing is given beyond itself but its very self, since it cannot be obtained from something else. (Pannenberg, 2004 [1991] I, p. 391) In other words, the "given" can no longer be negated because any attempt to negate it leads to itself as well; moreover, it actually *presupposes* it. This means that the "given" and the absolute negation of reduction coincide. (Ahlers, 1975, p. 262)

The absolute negation concretely leads to the concept of nothingness or void that apparently represents the touchstone of any authentic metaphysical thinking.

We have not reached these conclusions accidentally. They have become evident not only due to the fact that this concept represents a bone of contention where any materialist-positivist conception has previously faltered (Carnap, 1959, pp. 69-73) (with drastic consequences for this thinking), but also in light of the previous consideration, where we have shown the incidence of total negation when we consider an absolute ontological and phenomenological reduction through which the "given", on the one hand, coincides with the negation; on the other hand, the clearly rational and apodictic result of such an absolute reduction can only be the absolute suppression of everything and anything—i.e., nothingness.

One possible objection against this type of endeavor is the one according to which, when one achieves not only the phenomenological, but also the ontological reduction of any determination, one ends up abstractly possessing **two fundamental elements** (Octavian, 2003, pp. 16-17): *what it is*, i.e., that "quantum" of ontological positivity or presence or "substance" or singularity or "fullness" that represents the fundamental aim or goal of both intuition and noetic intentionality; respectively, *what it is not*, i.e. that meontological gap (Cornea, 2010, pp. 19-20) that in fact absolutely and exclusively separates

this determined and singular "quantum" from everything it is not, including from the point of view of the ontological rift between the determined occurrence of the "quantum" in relation to any possible, actual, material or ideal principle that would preordain or dominate its actualization.

Yet, by retaining *only one element*—the **nothingness, gap, rift, absence, negation**—one would commit a tacit and unjustified elimination of the other element—the **being, presence, unity, affirmation**—that can prove to be not only equally important, but, in truth, even more important than that of the gap, rift, absence, negation and nothingness.—As can be seen, since here we are somewhat referring to principles in their irreducible ontological foundation, our position is that all these concepts immediately susceptible of homonymy ("gap", "rift", "absence", "negation", "void", "nothingness") overlap in the same concept and both retain and manifest here the same primary and fundamental referent: that of the simultaneous ontological void, suppression, suspension, collapse or destruction, although to suppress, suspend, collapse, destroy or void are verbs with an abundant plurality of contextualisations. Any context implies an occurrence. Yet, the metaphysical discourse does not refer to an abstract unity or unilaterality, but to the **condition of total possibility** of any occurrence, which means that the meanings of these verbs become here absolutely synonymous in all their occurrences, based on a super-foundation or super-occurrence that dominates and enables referential multiplicity even in the **different modes** of actualization of this principle of Negation in "abstract" metaphysics itself. Because, as we can see, Nothingness too, or the meontological principle "is given in several ways" in its very principle of possibility which, however, absolutely transcendently unifies them.—

However, the problem lies in the fact that one would set out from a model of thinking based on *immediate representation*. And, if one is not careful, one would run the risk of not being able to escape a type of thinking based on immediate representation.

The immediate representation is that type of dianoetic activity consisting of determined and discourse images unfolding against a universe of "given" discourse apparently and unconsciously, therefore uncritically, assumed; this results in a confusion between the appearance of things and their essence, as well as in the proliferation of the formal separation between subject and object (Hegel, 2000, pp. 311-362; Forster, 1989, pp. 4-7, 117-147; Franks, 2008, pp. 53-57, 59-62, 69-73). Upon reaching this point, which needs to be irreducible and provide the certainty of the fact that one has escaped immediate representation and that the authentic conceptual endeavor can be anchored, one also has the legitimacy of speaking about the non-mediation of the "quantum" of presence or being, more precisely, about its actuality principle. Until this point, the "quantum" itself must be reduced or deconstructed. And this deconstructive endeavor is, actually, the very metaphysical discourse, respectively, the very "advance" or, if one wishes, the "return" to the *initium* point: the absolute Beginning, from zero premises. This means reaching the point in which immediate representation dies and the life of the concept begins. Here, the Hegelian statement that Being and Nothingness prove to be identical reveals its whole truth and, simultaneously, its entire homonymy (Schelling, 2007, pp. 194-197). It is only from this point forward that one has the possibility of authentically discussing about Being. Until this point, one would have to "mourn Being",[31] namely "advance" in the potentially lethal (but palingenetic) territory of noetic nothingness.[32]

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[31] The psychoanalytical condition of any transfer (inner release) is being released not only from the object relation, but also from the *habitus* of phallic satisfaction. This is why the "mourning" of the object of this *jouissance* must also be assumed.

[32] This noetic nothingness is not only intentionally and significantly, but also ontologically different from the nothingness of representation—the latter being a trivial discussion about insignificant things, namely small talk—the mystical explanation concerning noetic nothingness ("preserving the mind in hell") is impeccably done in the soteriology of the Pious Silouan the Athonite (Cuviosul Siluan Atonitul, 2001 [1991], pp. 81-84).

In the same key, our endeavor can no longer be a properly phenomenological one.[33] Phenomenology starts from a derived study in which one considers the result to be already "given" in what counts as unmediated, sensitive presence (empirical too, but not essentially empirical): the ontic manifest as such, the *phenomenon*. This direction cannot be directly and unequivocally followed by a philosophy that aims for effectiveness and wishes to clarify its guiding principles.[34] The results of the phenomenology initiated by the Husserlian tradition are notable and impressive (especially through their pairing with the results of Lacanian psychoanalysis), yet they have a markedly subjectivist topic in their transcendental foundation, that is why the revelation of irreducibility and, therefore, the ultimate orientation of conception is much more difficult and ambiguous.[35] Moreover, our

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[33] We are referring here to the tradition initiated by Franz Brentano (Brentano, 1975 [1862]) and whose intelligible architecture was so profoundly marked by Edmund Husserl (Husserl, 1994a; Husserl, 1982 [1931]; Husserl, 2006; Rollinger, 1999). This was later transformed by Martin Heidegger (Heidegger, 1994 [1984]; Heidegger, 1996 [1927]), after having been inaugurated by René Descartes and problematized by Immanuel Kant.

The last Heidegger was able to demonstrate the limits of the original concept of "given", but unfortunately, he did not carry through the consequences of this analysis. That is why his position was unfair to Hegel, as Hegel's philosophy appeared to Heidegger as very distorted when it was not a paradoxical and unexpected reprisal *à rebours* of some Hegelian results, considering that Hegel's *Phenomenology* actually touches upon and investigates the irreducible point of philosophical Beginning. One of the reasons why we subscribe to Hegel's position is that Hegel started out from a fundamentally sceptical conception in which the **_negative_** was considered in its essence together with the relations it implies and it is then taken to its ultimate consequences.

[34] Hegel drew attention to this circular request; before setting out to complete the endeavour of the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, he wanted to clarify both the sense of his vision and a few of the fundamental concepts with which he would speculatively engage in the **Preface** and **Introduction** to his work.

[35] The analytical "phenomenology" conceptualised by Bertrand Russell (Russell, 1951 [1912]) is only one of the superficial detours that phenomenological thinking can take.

present endeavor is engaged in an anabatic research of the Principle, while phenomenology is concerned with a catabatic research of the Principle's actualization in individualities (Ciomoș, 2008, p. 14).

The premise we assume in the present study could be called "Parmenidean" if we wish to emphasize the unity between thinking and being it postulates from the very beginning. But the premises of Eleatic ancient philosophy are not postulated here unmediated, because genuine unity, as we will demonstrate, is transcendent, thus eschatologically divided or negated, rather than immediate and intuitively-phenomenologically pure, as in Parmenides. In contemporary thinking, this agreement or this over-lapping between thinking and being is no longer given in a non-mediated, but only in a mediated way, i.e., through the negative.[36] This already implies investigating the issue of the negative and its real;[37] it is only afterwards that the appraisal of ontological metaphysics concerning Hegel's identity can be pronounced. Therefore, what is the negative and what is it like?

The Real and the homonymy of Absence. The Eleatic objection

The problem of the meontology from the historical *initium* of meta-physical thinking itself ecumenically confronts us with serious objections

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[36] This result appeared in the circumstances of the spirit established by the Judeo-Christian revolution through which the very essence of the phenomenon and determination is raised to the status of absolute foundation.
See, in this respect our article in which we have tried to briefly outline this idea. (Trif, 2014)

[37] By anticipating, we can mention here the shortcut that thinking presupposes when it actually detects the Real that supports and surrounds it and that also contains in itself the Unreal—as it is shown by the paradoxes and antinomies encountered in foundational thinking. This position is described in the following statement:

Whatever the nature of an object might be, first of all the object must exist. (Octavian, 2003, p. 15)

that appear insurmountable.[38] From the start, the Eleates reject any possible reference to Nothingness: indeed, as it initially appears, Nothingness means the absolute lack or absence of anything; therefore, how could "this" enter the discourse in any way? (Coxon, 2009 [1986], pp. 58-61: [4]-[6], 64-77: [8, 1-38], 102-105, 118, 230-240 sqq.). How can anything that cannot be a referent become a referent? How can anything that is completely absent become the object of a discourse? Adi Śankarāchārya, alongside the Vedanta tradition and the vast majority of Āstika orientations, essentially argues the same thing (Deutsch & Van Buitenen, 1971, pp. 126-128, 199: III, 2, 32). However, through its unilateral insistence of the absolute transcendence of Brahman-Ātman, Śankarāchārya's doctrine often seems to lead, more or less consciously or intentionally, to a meontological postulation of this transcendence. (Hegel, 2010 [1832], pp. 283-284)

More recently, even a relativist-monistic metaphysical orientation such as empiricist-positivism rejects any possible reference to Nothingness (and, evidently, to metaphysics). Although, in the case of positivism, its fundamental premise is not ontological, but ontic, it claims to reject any logical entity that cannot justify its content through being founded on the "quantum" of being or of determined presence of the sensitive world (Carnap, 1959, p. 71).

First, one must distinguish between "secondary unbeing" and absolute Unbeing (Hegel, 2010 [1832], p. 60). A "secondary unbeing" is nothing more than the absence of one or several determined elements or beings— it is, therefore, a determined absence that keeps the horizon of appearance open; in other words, one speaks about a potential unbeing. On the other hand, in the case of absolute Unbeing, the absence of anything and everything

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[38] In his book, Andrei Cornea made an ample demonstration of the way in which the various Greek schools of thought related to the issue of Unbeing and of their collective types of attitudes regarding Nothingness. The attitudes concerning the Unbeing in Greek philosophy apparently amount to three (p. 19-26): ontological, anti-meontological and meontological.

is preeminent. We will discuss below the relationship between these two types of nothingness and we will demonstrate that "secondary unbeing" is essentially reducible to absolute Unbeing.

Thus, the absolute Unbeing or Nothingness is what needs to be considered here.—When metaphysical thinking was applied to concepts implying a superlative level of abstraction and indicating as referents elements that cannot actually be found in reality (unless, at most, as remote similitudes or analogies with those in the sensitive reality), this kind of thinking was immediately accused of the impropriety of *hypostatisation*, i.e., of the sin of *immediate representation* that tries to transform its object into something substantial which exists on its own and as independent or radically separated from the subject (Biard, et al., 1981, p. 9), with a positive and effectively ontological content, although it is nothing more than a subjective psychological projection of an image later on expressed through empty language games that disregard a series of grammar syntax and formal logic rules. Objections of this kind are no exception in the issue of Nothingness or Unbeing. (Carnap, 1959, p. 71; Doz, 1987, pp. 48-49).

We are told that Nothingness does not exist and thus, it cannot be introduced into language and representation as an entity (Coxon, 2009 [1986], pp. 58-61: [4]-[6], 64-77: [8, 1-38]). It is pure void, pure un-assignable non-intuitive absence; a mere non-existence about which one can say absolutely nothing, since it is in no way part of the order to discernible phenomena or even of concepts that could claim even an imaginary referent. By definition, Nothingness is the absolute non-referent. Most people have nothing to say about it or think absolutely nothing of it and pay no attention to it. At best, when it is included in language as an adverb, it is only used to indicate a neutral and absolutely negligible absence of something determined and it is accompanied para- or infra-intuitively by an equally indifferent or perplexed shrug. (Hegel, 2010 [1832], pp. 61, 70)

If one pays closer attention to this matter, however, it does not seem quite so trivial. The question that arises in this case is simple: if we claim that a certain object does not exist, **then is this absence real or not**?[39] If one should tell us that here we fall once more into the error of hypostatisation, we would reply, in all seriousness, that there is nothing hypostasising in considering that the lack or absence of something presents itself with non-sensible evidence as being something very *real*, but *very much outside reality*. (Hegel, 2010 [1832], pp. 76-78; Rohs, 1972, p. 58)

If we were to reduce everything to reality as such as would argue that this reality alone is the sensitive, perceptual and manifest horizon of the phenomenally determined world, one would no longer be able to under-stand how the distinction among things, or their absence, can be possible. The unreal nature of absence itself would mean the omnipresence of every-thing. Because this absence is not only the space emptied of the presence of that which has disappeared, but also the unmediated and un-assignable rift

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[39] The first antecedent of these considerations in European philosophy can be found in the Greek sophists, respectively Gorgias (Guthrie, 1977 [1969], pp. 196-197; Cornea, 2010, pp. 60-61). The old sophist was the first to argue that, inasmuch as the non-existent is non-existent, it is given as non-existent, therefore it *exists as non-existent*. But Gorgias' meaning is still determinative, because it emphasises the concept of **existence** which he differentiates from the concept of **non-existence**, thus the concept of **non-existent** seems to be ascribed to determined, i.e., potential absence. But here too it is quite evident that the very determined absence of a thing must be real, otherwise the thing would be present. Moreover, however, Gorgias does not respect his own speculative conclusion which he formulated only to completely undermine any meaning of being and existence and to prove that nothing would exist in a real and effective way, as he himself admits… the "absurdity" of claiming that what is non-existent "should both exist and not exist at the same time".—When it suits him, depending on what he subjectively envisaged, the sophist is content with "respecting" the law of non-contradiction, although his basic thesis is that *there is no criterion* (Guthrie, 1977 [1969], pp. 195-196), and thus no principle of non-contradiction. This is why the solution that should have been evident (the speculative one) is immediately rejected (Guthrie, 1977 [1969], pp. 196-197).— Ultimately, sophists do not respect their own premises and results, namely they do not take their own thoughts seriously.

between existing things in themselves or between existing and future or past things, as well as the ontologically un-assignable place of falsity and error.[40] In order to pass from one thing to another, one would need a caesura, an absolute discontinuity at the limit between the two. If one tried to argue that this caesura is not absolute, but relative, one would have to reply that relative discontinuity would imply that things would not have a decisive ontological border and they would continuously, absolutely, and indistinctively pass from one to the other—i.e., they would have already done so. In simpler terms, one would not be able to delimitate one thing from another, to tell one thing apart from another, because the difference would be non-existent. A relative border would be a pure appearance, and appearances are impossible in an absolutely homogenous ontological horizon, namely where the difference presupposed by appearance or illusion itself is impossible. Attempting a determined difference ("an illusion, an appearance") in a purely homogenous discourse already presupposes the difference, thus its non-homogeneity; inside or towards whatever point we might move, one already notes that the point could be identified because it has separated, it has differentiated itself from the background. In other words, in order to have a determined difference, this cannot be substantiated unless it is the prior condition of an Indetermined or absolute Difference.—

From here derives the sophistic, self-contradictory ambiguity of positivism or materialism: on the one hand, it claims that world and things are determined or determinable and measurable, so that there are differences and ontological caesuras among them. On the other, it claims that the ontological differences that help distinguish among things by marking their boundaries are not real, are not irreducible in the essence that underpins them. Therefore, no transcendence and no ontology would be given, because only determined ontic differences would subsist. Following Heidegger's assessment when

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[40] As Plato demonstrates in **The Sophist**, **236b-241e**, where he shows that non-being exists (Plato, 1997, pp. 256-262).

speaking of the transcendence of Being towards beings (*Sein ist vom Seienden unterschieden*)—that "this possibility of distinction, insures an understanding-of-being" (Heidegger, 1978 [1928], p. 193; Heidegger, 1984 [1978], p. 152)—an absolute ontological Difference wouldn't exist either. Yet, in order to have "only determined differences", the things for which these differences would be given and the discursive universe in which they are supposed to operate, ***all things should be a priori absolutely determined, i.e., differentiated***.—

The ineffectiveness of absence that only Nothingness or Void could bestow would mean the absolute pantopia of Being, as the entire existence would be merged into and pervaded by Being, and the multiple could no longer even be an illusion. Because illusion itself would be impossible,[41] since any difference is absolutely absent, and illusion is nothing more than precisely *a real and irreducible difference, i.e., between fact and appearance.*

As can be also seen above, our noetic discourse was deconstructive from the very start and we have precisely indicated the need to overcome the state of immediate representation through the skeptical stance. Therefore, the revelation of the meontologically terminus point, Nothingness, could be achieved precisely to eliminate hypostatisation, i.e., *immediate representation*, from our reference system. Thus, this terminus point in which we find a form of "concreteness" or "substantiality" in the very final point of the horizon or possibility (*Möglichkeit*) and actuality (*Wirklichkeit*) of deconstructing immediate representation, no longer falls under *immediate representation*. This does not occur because we proclaim it, but due to the coincidence between the nullifying action of deconstruction and its principle of possibility/actuality

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[41] This consequence absolutely annuls the entire Hindu scenario of how the determined world appeared in relation to Brahman through a pretended game of illusion, i.e., through the ontological accident of error or through the veil of universal ignorance, Māyā. No duality or difference could ever be obtained, under any form (forms are impossible "there") from the pure and absolute self-transparency of the acausal and a-causing Principle of absolute non-division.

(*Möglichkeit/ Wirklichkeit*). If this coincidence would not occur, then we might be rightfully accused of immediate representation or hypostatisation.[42] But hypostatisation is representation and representation is always given *in time*. As such, hypostatisation would meet Kant's objection concerning the ontological argument for causation, thus, it would also entail that Nothingness would be a determined absence in time, (Girard, 1995, p. 105) thus, not the absence in itself.

Moreover, without the reality of difference, thinking itself would be impossible. Parmenides, Lykophron and Antisthenes had already noted that any pairing between subject and predicate in a judgment leads to the alteration of the "unmediated" identity presupposed by the concept of these terms. (Guthrie, 1977 [1969], pp. 209-210; Blaga, 1998, pp. 40-41; Vlăduțescu, 1994, pp. 132-135) The oneness of the subject is united in judgment with the multiplicity of the predicate. If the difference is not given, then the alterity between concepts, respectively between subject and predicate, should not be either. Thus, judgment should not be possible alongside its copula, "is", which, as point of establishment and passing of determinations, represents the schematic image of the simultaneous ontological unity and difference among multiples. At any rate, Lycophron wanted to eliminate it in order to eradicate the antinomy of judgment (Vlăduțescu, 1994, pp. 132-135), as Aristotle too points out by quoting Lycophron's fragments (Lykophron) [in *Phys.* I (A.) 2. 185 b 25, (Banu, 1979, p. 525)].

On the other hand, if we see with our own eyes and perceive with our own senses and think with our own minds the entire multiple of the world

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[42] This is the error that Russell's logic fell into when it transformed the *intension* of concepts in *extensional elements*, which resulted in the elimination of the difference between the signifier and the signified (or, in Frege's terms, between sign and concept). This is because Russell only conceives the consideration of a logical object under the guise of objectification, which is why he solves philosophical problems at the level of syntactic amphibolies of formal logic. (Russell, 1947, pp. 857-861)

in which movement is real, in which destruction, change, transformation, suffering, birth, death, growth, decrease are evident realities, it becomes evident that all these distinctions cannot be given in the absence of the very reality of Unbeing. (Girard, 1995, pp. 404-405) And if one were to repeat the objection that all these distinctions are merely the product of ignorance and illusion, the objection would turn against itself: how can ignorance and illusion exist where pure and absolute self-transparency, and unerring truth are given as counterparts?

If one is to examine scientifically the world of elementary micro particles, one observes a myriad of distinctions, namely differences. Even if one considers subatomic elements that are capable of physical ubiquity or, simultaneously, of a double nature—undulating and corpuscular—, these elements are nonetheless marked by delimitations in their most evident aspects, thus: the photon is not an electron, the electron is neither a proton nor a positron, the quark is not a lepton, the up quark is different from the down quark, the charm quark is different from the strange quark, the top quark is different from the bottom quark[43] etc.—At any rate, the opinion according to which science, within science, using the experimental and theoretical tools of science, would be able to find an absolute foundation,

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[43] The changes between the elementary states of micro particles (for instance, the division of a neutron outside the atomic nucleus into a proton, electron or antineutrino electron, or when an electron decreases to a lower level of energy and emits a photon) can have results through which some micro particles might change their nature by undergoing changes in mass, electrical charge, etc. However, the difference between then, as long as it is maintained, remains real and their interactions and behaviour differ according to state. The fact that those particular changes do not occur in any conditions is a further argument in favour of the reality of difference that separates them and, last but not least, unites them. The claim that only the illusion of difference would underpin such a diversity of states, properties and interactions is contradicted by the nature and the exemplary effectiveness, therefore by the **reality** of this "illusion" itself and its indeterminate number of replications by the indeterminate number of variables and fluctuations that affect microparticles in a given physical volume. (Smolin, 2006, pp. 5-6)

an ultimate level of reality in which differences would be erased or overlapped absolutely, is but the product of a transcendental illusion that confounds the objects of knowledge registries. Any object that is detectable or comprehensible through formal and natural, i.e., circumscribed and determined, cognitive registers will be a natural and formal, i.e., determined object. All that measuring instruments or formal intellect are capable of discerning represents, by definition, determined elements, ontically disjunct from the field of their perception and from the real or possible multiplicity that frames them or relates them one way or another. It is impossible to discern something informal and supernatural with the help of the natural and formal cognitive apparatus unless that element is already given as naturally differentiated, namely, phenomenally manifest—hence, formed as a result of an ontic differentiation and, then, of a phenomenologically fundamental one.

Thus, not only the distinction, but also the unity among things would also be suppressed. Because in a supposed unity lacking any sort of division, the only real subsisting element would be that of absolutely unmediated singularity. Yet, absolute singularity absolutely unmediated means precisely pure isolation and thus, reduction to Nothingness, as Hegel observed through speculative implication (Hegel, 2018 [1807], pp. 60-68). If a certain form of multiple would be given in such a singularity through *reductio ad absurdum*, every element or moment in the multiple would be immersed in absolute inter-elementary isolation, in pure heterogeneity, in the equally unmediated ways in which it would suppress itself (Hegel, 2018 [1807], pp. 60-68).—In other words, the unreality of Unbeing (or the absolute absence of absolute absence) would lead precisely to the absolute suppression of any sub-sistence, thus to the collapse of the ontological horizon in the Nothingness which it would aim to avoid.

Only the reality of Nothingness (in terms of a subject's intentionality, only assuming it) provides the possibility of achieving the genuine transcendence of the true unity of Being, as one will see below.

Finally, in order to glimpse the apodicticity of the Nothingness concept, we will have to briefly undertake a mental experiment concerning the evolution of the phenomenological and ontological reduction of the multiple and determinations.

The transcendental appearance of ontological relativism

We have argued above that, for rigorous thinking, an exhaustion of the determining reduction can only lead to the annulment of any "quantic" presence and to the pure suppression of the entire existence in Nothingness. In other words, only Nothingness can reveal itself as a foundation in a reduction that starts from determination and representation, if its result is rigorously pursued.

Any determined element is marked by ontological negation both externally and in its interiority. Externally, it is clear that it is different from other things. Internally, its external limit also marks the properties of its content that can only be a few, rather than an infinity (since it is exclusively marked externally) and that can have a limited subsistence (for the same reasons). For, once a thing is marked by an external boundary, distinguishing it from other things would be included, at least implicitly, in the definition of its own content.[44]

Negation means privation or absence in traditional metaphysics.[45] (Hegel, 1969 [1832] W5, I, p. 121; Hegel, 2010 [1832], p. 87) But, as the

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[44] We can argue that the intelligible definition is the one which, after deciding on the defining properties of an object, will represent its essence and therefore, its external circumscribing. But these considerations fall outside the scope of the present work.

[45] This concept is already present in the works of the Holy Fathers of the Christian Church where they speak about the Divine Being—*see*, for instance, Maximus Confessor's beginning of his *Two Hundred Chapters on Knowledge* (Maximus Confessor, 1985, pp. 129-130: I, 1.-10.) and Saint John of Damascus (Saint John of Damascus, 1999 [1958], pp. 169-170). But the one who imposed this concept in metaphysics is

negative has its compelling role in the whole of reality, its elimination only gives rise to abstract Being which reveals itself as Nothing, and as such, in reality the affirmative and the negative are inextricably containing each other. (Hegel, 1969 [1832] W5, I, pp. 118-121; Hegel, 2010 [1832], pp. 85-87) As such, any determination of a thing will mirror not only a positive content element in that thing, but also an absence, an ontological gap which brings the outside of the thing. (Hegel, 1969 [1832] W5, I, pp. 136-137; Hegel, 2010 [1832], pp. 98-99) That is why, the truth long affirmed by idealism and many religious traditions is reconfirmed here too: any determined or limited thing is mortal and, thus, deconstructible or reducible[46] (be it ideally, or ideally and really). (Hegel, 1969 [1832] W5, I, p. 140; Hegel, 2010 [1832], pp. 101-102) This being the case, the entire determined reality that can be perceived by our human thoughts and senses is eliminated in a phenomeno-logical or ontological reduction endeavor, because the legitimate aim of this endeavor is the understanding of the origin and totality of things.

Reduction, regardless of whether it is achieved progressively, on levels, or is achieved exhaustively and without mediation, will have the same result: Nothingness or Unbeing. (Hegel, 2010 [1832], pp. 188, 289-290)

Benedict Spinoza in his famous **Letter 50. Spinoza to Jelles 2 June 1674 (To the most worthy and judicious Jarig Jelles, from B.d.S.)** (Spinoza, 2002, p. 892). *Also see* Yithzak Y. Melamed and Hegel (Hegel, 2010 [1832], pp. 87, 472; Melamed, 2012, pp. 175-176). This idea is also implicitly expressed in Spinoza's *Ethics*, **Definition 6. Explication**. (Spinoza, 2002, p. 217)

[46] We anticipate here the problem of determined being who, although deconstructible, is not, however, mortal. Theology and metaphysics would quickly point out the species of actually determined infinite that does have a beginning but does not have an end. This is true. But this absence of an end limit does not imply the absolute of the determined infinite which is specifically circumscribed, and that is why it could never achieve an immutable, irreducible unity of Being, especially considering that the genus of determined infinite also includes the potential infinite, the opposite of the actually determined one. Moreover, ultimately, for human beings, despite their circumscription, the horizon of immutability is open, just as the participating horizon of the Increate is open for creatures, as the Christian tradition postulates.

However, the progressive reduction can claim the illusion that it could delay its meontological terminus point, because it would apparently be endless in the perpetual, infinite regression of levels on the infinite ladder of Being or of beings.

—The reduction method is analogous with mathematical procedures since the times of Archimedes and Euclid, who observed the possibility of translating certain geometric values into other geometric values through the **method of exhaustion** which consists in decomposing and simplifying an irregular geometric shape or one with an unknown surface into simple smaller polynomials which could be used to introduce the respective figure in an already known or accessible calculus formula (Smith, 1951, p. 84). We mention this method here because it presents a significant analogy with the speculative method of reducing concepts to their essence. This latter method aims precisely at detailing the content of a concept or of a representation through which one would simultaneously observe the opposing or diverse aspects of the content of the respective representation or concept (Hegel, 2018 [1807], p. 15; Hegel, 2010 [1832], pp. 35-36, 67-68). This is when the unity of the noetic object is achieved and exhausted, therefore, it becomes open towards its own actual infinity.—This is the understanding of exhaustive reduction from an ontological perspective. The determinations are analyzed and thus reduced to their basic components to the point where these components can no longer be reduced, because reducing them would mean presupposing them. This result would directly lead to an efficient comprehension of the ontological horizon: one can theorize the actual infinite or totality. (Leibniz, 1989b, pp. 73-74)—Certainly, there are also differences between the two approaches, the metaphysical and the mathematical one. Mathematics operates with formally finite determined objects. Metaphysics operates not only with ideal objects, but also with objects that are open in the infinite or indeterminate horizon. The method of mathematical exhaustion leads to an always partial division of the irregular figure, because there is

always some small part that remains divisible but that, on account of its size, is negligible. On the other hand, metaphysics can afford to generalize concepts precisely because the ideal exhaustion does not require narrowingly conforming with sensibility when it comes to abstracting and "shortcutting" or instantaneously achieving the intended multiplicity. Or, as Hegel says:

> In the ought the transcendence of finitude, infinity, begins. The ought is that which, in the subsequent development, in accordance with the said impossibility, will display itself as a progress to infinity. (Hegel, 2010 [1832], p. 105)

Andrei Cornea, analyzing the method of exhaustion in his volume (Cornea, 2010, p. 50), subsumes this method to proofs in favor of a potential nothingness in which the *reductio ad absurdum* provided by Zenon the Eleate to reject the beginning of determinate beings could be blocked. The same source also evokes Aristotle's method for dealing with the issue of infinite divisibility: Aristotle claimed that, since there is a difference between the infinite divisibility as possibility, respectively as effective act, one should not recourse to it in order to annul the effectiveness of determined existence, because we will never be able to overcome a certain limit of division and could never experience *realiter* the infinity of divisions. Yet, this problem is misconceived: the effectiveness of an element cannot be (not wholly, at any rate) dependent on the capacities of a subject or on the contextual circumstance in which it is discussed; it must be judged under **its own conditions of possibility**. In this sense, any division or identification of parts is impossible in the absence of the **absolute horizon of division** that must be present, real and open so that any determined division could take place (Leibniz, 1989a, p. 238)—otherwise, the same thing goes for the opposite endeavor, that of unifying or synthetically exhausting a multiple, a visionary formulation that underpins the foundation of the ontological argument. Contrary to this, the determined division falls into the impossibility of its own actualization, because it has an infinite number of steps to go through to reach its very

first actualization point which makes its movement contradictory. (Kol'man & Yanovskaya, 1983 [1931, 1968], pp. 257-258) Therefore, the Eleatic argument returns in full force, but it moves in the opposite direction with the Eleates' final intention: if they wanted to establish the unreality of nothingness in behalf of an absolutely simple and continuous being, on the contrary, the hereby argument favors the exhaustion of infinite division which would have the same effect as the consummation of finitude, because its result—***nothingness***—will emerge with a fundamentally modified status. In any case, as Hegel observes, the finitude always ends up in nothingness if considered into its own exhaustion (Hegel, 1969 [1832] W5, I, p. 141; Hegel, 2010 [1832], pp. 102-103) since it has not the possibility to maintain itself beyond its own limit. Thus, any division of so-called "infinite" progressions of determinacies is already given as exhausted by the very nature of the limit by which that determinacies, as finitudes, are marked in themselves.—

This type of objection that supposes delaying the meontological terminus point through the infinite ladder of Being or of beings is in solidarity with ontological models that try to avoid postulating any form of ontological Totality or metaphysical Absolute in order to theorize the essence of the world under the concept of an irreducible relativism. The cosmological postulates of the "eternal world", "the eternity of world becoming", the causality that determines an infinity of elements and ontological levels, or that of a circular (Priest, 1995, p. 21), therefore infinite recurrence of the ontological foundation of a series of determined elements—all these images or representations of the... "absolute" ontic relativism (we can already discern also the ontological oxymoron, not just the linguistic one), regardless of whether they were conceived in the old mythologies or in the hypotheses of modern scientific cosmology, take exception to any form of ontological Difference, namely of absolute reduction; implicitly, to any form of transcendence and absolute and transcendent ontological unity. But this type of system is impossible

because, in its infinitely determined recurrence, it cannot have closure, self-subsistence. It is the "bad infinite" (*schlechten Unendlichkeit*) against which Hegel warned. (Hegel, 1969 [1832] W5, I, p. 149 & sqq; Hegel, 2010 [1832], p. 109 & sqq; Kol'man & Yanovskaya, 1983 [1931, 1968], pp. 261-262)

Certainly, from a logical standpoint, this impossibility has already been proven by Kurt Gödel when he demonstrated Russell's impossibility of making a hierarchy of predicative types (Gödel, 1986). However, since here we discuss the possibility or impossibility of an ontological, not simply an ideal, order, we will briefly outline the arguments against this postulate in a different manner—in an onto-logical expose with the help of natural language.

The idea of infinite recurrence or infinite hierarchies or scalar ontology—"the great chain of being" (Lovejoy, 2001 [1936], pp. 55-98) or "Behemoth" (Florensky, 1997 [1914], pp. 24-26), as it is known in the old traditions that, however, *did not support the ontological autonomy of string determinations*—is based on three concepts: **a.** the entire sphere of the real is made up of an infinite string of interdependent elements; **b.** the elements determine one another in a certain order or hierarchy; **c.** there is no absolute or irreducible ontological foundation or reality, no totality of the sphere of the real that would represent an univocal and absolute principle of this multiple; the states, influences and conditionings etc. both of any element and the string depend entirely on the context or on the particular, even singular, perspective of the element taken into consideration. (Hegel, 1969 [1832] W5, I, p. 151; Hegel, 2010 [1832], p. 110)

All of these mean that: 1. there is no actuality of the string or series; 2. the model of the string is pure possibility (*Möglichkeit*); 3. this pure possibility is reducible to Nothingness (*Abgrund*) because of the string's impossibility and of all its levels; 4. the string is self-contradictory, since it is postulated as being "absolutely relative"—a concept which is a contradiction in terms on its own. This contradiction is non-speculative, because specularity means exhaustive totality through difference. (Hegel, 1969 [1832] W5, I,

p. 152; Hegel, 2010 [1832], p. 111) Yet, in a string of this type, as we will demonstrate, totality, exhaustion and difference are all rejected.

1. The non-actuality of the string results from the absolute progressive infinite dependence of each level or element on the preceding ones. Since there is no unrelative or unconditional identity that would provide an irreducible ontological basis to the string or to any of its elements, or a simultaneous and unmediated absolute infinite actualization for the string's multiple, every moment or determined level of the string must, in fact, be actualized independently of the others and of any other possible instance. But then it would no longer be a string. Moreover, the actuality of every element would be infinitely delayed, i.e., delayed to the infinite number of levels or elements conditioning it. For, in order for the element or level x to be actualized, it is necessary that, previously, x^∞ elements should have been already actualized (where x > 1),[47] considering that every element out of x^∞ elements, and x^∞ itself, are affected by the same non-actualization or infinite conditionality. In other words, an infinite conditionality would lead to an infinite delay, which directly leads to the concept of ontological impossibility or pure ontological blockage.—The infinite (∞) is hereby taken as unlimited both quantitatively and qualitatively, without making difference between actual and possible infinite; while the difference between the absolute and determined infinite cannot be yet considered since the very object of our discussion is here precisely the error of the rejection of the absolute that relativism supposes.

2. It is not difficult to note that the model according to which this infinity of strings should be actualized is that of infinite progression. The only problem would be that, without an already given principle of actualization,

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[47] Conversely, to demonstrate reduction, we can mathematically suggest the infinity of the string that must be previously actualized through the formula: $\left(\dfrac{1}{x}\right)^\infty$, where x > 1.

no progression can be actualized by virtue of the infinity of steps that need to be undertaken for each individual level. (Hegel, 2010 [1832], pp. 182-184) The objection against approaching the limit, which Zeno of Elea raised against infinite movement in his famous logical and mathematical paradoxes, returns in full force.—In order for A to be constituted, it is necessary for A' to have been constituted; in order for A' to be constituted, it is necessary for A'' to have been constituted; in order for A'' to be constituted, it is necessary for A''' to have been constituted etc., *ad infinitum*. One cannot escape pure possibility precisely because of the infinite suspension of the origin's foundation point, a point infinitely delayed or blocked.

—Some authors claim that, after the discovery and development of mathematical analysis and differential calculus, the issue raised by the Eleatic paradoxes has been solved (Seife, 2002 [2000], pp. 54-58). The invention of the mathematical void (∅), and its scoring in the numerical set through 0 would be responsible for this progress, so that the divisibility of determined being would still be able to reach its limit through its instantaneous reduction to void or zero. This occurs under the conditions in which, as is well known, Greek thought in general and Eleatic thought in particular "abhorred the vacuum" in ontology and indetermination in general, for which reason they did not conceive Being as having any point of absolute ontological discontinuity in itself—an indispensable condition for the infinite divisibility (of determined being) discussed in Zeno's paradoxes.

We believe that, although the introduction of the concept of terminality in mathematics led to explaining the existence of determination and quanta, however this concept should be approached metaphysically. Otherwise, it risks becoming a limitative condition indicating a speculative blockage. As a prerequisite to any progression, thus to any change, the void represents an immediate terminal point of cancellation, thus limiting or blocking any elementary formation. If it remains at this level, one can no longer understand

how both the inter-elementary translation and the interaction among noetic components can occur ("How can 0 be overcome in the numerical string?" or "How can elements which are separated by ∅ be engaged in a mutual relation?"), be they mathematical, logical or of any other conceptual nature. But the very original formation of any first original element remains obscure and is threatened by the irrepressible and invincible specter of arbitrariness which would compromise any kingdom of Logos. One can only add to this the fact that any determined being, taken in its pure abstraction, in its pure ontological presence, is participating in Being and, being founded by the latter, there is no reason why the concept of infinite divisibility could not thus be reinstated, even if the possibility of exhaustiveness in a void is accepted—a thesis that could be assessed only at the closure of the present text. This would imply that, essentially, a creature cannot be un-created, or, at any rate, not through infinite progressive divisibility; and that, in fact, it is erroneous to call a creature "finite". As Hegel says:

> ...finitude is negation *fixed in itself* and, as such, stands in stark contrast to its affirmative. The finite thus does indeed let itself be submitted to flux; this is precisely what it is, that it should come to an end, and this end is its only determination. Its refusal is rather to let itself be brought affirmatively to its affirmative, the infinite, to be associated with it; it is therefore inseparably posited with its nothing, and thereby cut off from any reconciliation with its other, the affirmative. The determination of finite things does not go past their *end*. The understanding persists in this sorrow of finitude, for it makes non-being the determination of things and, at the same time, this non-being *imperishable* and *absolute*. (Hegel, 2010 [1832], p. 102)

Finitude is its own end and cannot be the foundation or the primary or ultimate ground of anything since it coincides with its own evanescence. Thus, everywhere in nature we would encounter the infinite instead, not the absolute one, but the determined infinite or infinite in its genus.

Following Leibniz, who claimed that he could no longer see finite objects anywhere in the world, G. Cantor argues, after developing his theory explained in *Mannigfaltigkeitslehre*, that human intellect was structurally formed in the horizon of infinity which is, anyway, inherent to it (Becker, 1968 [1954], pp. 322-328). Moreover, in Zeno's paradoxes, it is the very infinite divisibility of Being that is rejected by rejecting the fundamental condition of this divisibility: the realness of Nothingness, of the Void as it was postulated by the atomists. Consequently, rejecting the Void did not result, as some mistakenly believed, in the infinite divisibility of Being (a consequence seen as disastrous and unacceptable by the Eleates in particular and the Greeks in general), but in the immediate completeness of its unity. Hegel says:

> The infinite is the negation of negation, the affirmative, being that has reinstated itself out of restrictedness. The infinite *is*, in a more intense sense than the first immediate being; it is the true being; the elevation above restriction.
>
> (...)
>
> It is the very nature of the finite that it transcend itself, that it negate its negation and become infinite. (...) In so far as the finite itself is being elevated to infinity, it is not at all an alien force that does this for it; it is rather its nature to refer itself to itself as restriction (both restriction as such and as ought) and to transcend this restriction, or rather, in this self-reference, to have negated the restriction and gone above and beyond it. It is not in the sublation of the finite in general that infinity in general comes to be, but the finite is rather just this, that through its nature it comes to be itself the infinite. Infinity is its *affirmative determination*, its vocation, what it truly is in itself. (Hegel, 2010 [1832], pp. 109-110)

Essentially, the contradiction revealed by the Eleatic paradoxes is the one between the atomists' postulate of the Void, of Nothingness as foundation, on the one hand, which implies the ***terminality of determinate being***,

from which some would derive its very *finite* nature, and on the other, the infinite progression of division, which means precisely the ***uncircumscription of determinate being***, i.e., its *infinity*.

However, the problem is that going from Being (even understood as determinate being) to Nothingness (or unbeing) constitutes the very absolute passage between contradictory concepts. Accomplishing such a passage is impossible through *progression*, as the atomists claimed, because no matter how fragmented Being (or determinate being) would be, we would still be on its territory. Overcoming it in favor of Nothingness or unbeing would require an absolute shortcut, an absolute exhaustion of traversing the Being, its integral totality, an absolute qualitative leap to find its limit. In other words, this overcoming should have already been given, already been accomplished. This, once more, implies the specularity of exhaustion only encountered in the concept of actual infinity and of which Hegel speaks as the speculative duality between "restriction" (*die Schranke*) and "the ought" (*das Sollen*). (Hegel, 1969 [1832] W5, I, pp. 142-148; Hegel, 2010 [1832], pp. 103-108) The transcendence or the opening and transition of finitude towards the infinite is the result of this "pulling" of the finitude beyond its own restriction into what we here call *the exhaustion* of the infinite and, as such, the coincidence between limit and illimitation in the concept of the actual infinity. Progression, on the contrary, maintains the two, *restriction* and *the ought* exterior to one another. (Hegel, 1969 [1832] W5, I, p. 151; Hegel, 2010 [1832], p. 110)

Overcoming Being or determinate being would practically mean that Nothingness or non-being is already given (Hegel, 2010 [1832], pp. 58-60). Moreover, this immediate apprehension of the two concepts of Being and Nothingness only occurs from an outside third perspective that encompasses both. Videlicet, only when we have overcome and preserved a concept (in Hegel's words, *Aufhebung*) will that concept prove its effectiveness (Hegel, 2018 [1807], p. 69; Hegel, 2010 [1832], pp. 81-82). Once overcome, its entire

infinite inner essence is contained and apprehended, i.e., it is infinitely actual. Until the concept is not overcome, and we are still in its conceptual territory from which we cannot escape, the infinity of its essence is still determined and strictly, narrowingly potential, thus ineffective and impotent.

Conversely, we will also see that Being's or determinate being's synthesis, namely the ontological founding of *the something*, presumes an absolute result of exhaustiveness: that of the Nothing itself in this case. Nothingness must be overcome too so that the founding of the origin point of *something's* inception can occur: this implies the same exhaustiveness. However, this result will be further investigated below and we will see that it was not possible for it to emerge until the development of Christianity's Trinity doctrine, (Pannenberg, 2004 [1991] I, p. 131) because it requested as prerequisite the absolute ontological transfiguration of the Negative. (Hegel, 1895, III, pp. 21-22, 35-37; Pannenberg, 2004 [1991] II, p. 28) As already shown, the reverberations of this Revelation are assumed by Hegel himself, (Hegel, 1895, III, pp. 12, 35-37; Brito, 1983, pp. 508-522; Yerkes, 1983, pp. 114-117; Vieillard-Baron, 2006, pp. 46-52; Schlitt, 2012 [1984], pp. 21-23) although in a rather unorthodox manner, when he assumes the very evil as being a necessary moment of God's unity. (Hyppolite, 1946 II, pp. 508-509; König, 1999, pp. 134-142)

To summarize the situation of the Eleatic paradox in a new approach, hereby exposed: the infinite divisibility of determinate being is real, but it is achievable (i.e., determinate being can be terminally and exhaustively divided) only if the absolute of Nothingness is given both as its boundary and as suppression of its boundary. Thus, determinate being reveals itself, simultaneously, as infinite in its essential infinitely divisible inwardness or an inwardness with an infinite variation; and as completed, finished, even as something that can be overcome, apprehended, contained, but only if the exhaustive nullification through its reduction is admitted.—If Nothingness is not real, then escaping the essence or inwardness of a concept is also not real and thought remains a prisoner of conceptual monism. (Hegel, 1969

[1832] W5, I, p. 140; Hegel, 2010 [1832], p. 102)—Thus we see now that ancient metaphysics was blocked by the impossibility of the occurrence of the actual infinity (either by postulating the potential one as a real foundation in Aristotle's version, or by postulating the abstract, separate, thus ineffective, transcendence of the Principle—*nulla est fluxorum scientia*—in the Platonic and neo-Platonic versions) (Octavian, 2003, pp. X-XI, 40-48).—

3. The entire string of the infinite "ladder" or infinite becoming is impossible even if, through a miraculous occurrence, it would be actualized, as some scholars conceived it, postulating a circular interconditionality in a loop of determined elements.—As G. Priest paralogistically believes (Priest, 1995, pp. 21-22). (Priest's second thesis for the elimination of Aristotelian *prime matter*, which argues that at the zero level of substance one would have an entity that would represent the coincidence between form and matter, is nothing more than either a paralogism, or the thesis of the Actual Infinity itself.)—In other words, once actualized, this "ladder" would fall apart in the same instant, on account of the fact that the elements cannot support one another mutually or scalarly in the absolute, even when their system would be circular. (Hegel, 2010 [1832], pp. 184, 189-192) Let us not forget the third fundamental postulate of this system (the most important one): no absolute totality, no pure unity, no identity transcending the elements of the string is given. If this were the case, then element A, for instance, would have to causally and/or ontologically support element B succeeding it; and this, in turn, would have to support element C and so on. But this implies that element A has an endpoint, a limit, a negation in order to allow a transition to element B. But we find ourselves in the situation in which, once A reached its endpoint,[48] as we are forbidden from postulating a form of indeterminate identity, which

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[48] We note here a tacit self-contradiction: even though ontological relativism does not acknowledge absolute terminality, it still puts forward the absolute difference (i.e., the absolute terminality) of the string's elements.

should actually be, infinitely and absolutely transcendent and common to A and B, one can no longer see how the transition to B would be possible.[49] The endpoint of A would result in an absolute ontological chasm or, better said, in an absolute meontological chasm. Certainly, one possible objection would be that there could appear an immediately superior and determined level between A and B, hierarchically superior to A and B, say A', which is responsible for the community between and A and B and thus of their communicability. So, A' would ontologically supplant the presupposed lack of difference between A and B and would insure the transition from A to B. But the string is only an infinite succession of elements without an absolute transcendent identity, such that A' would find itself in the exact same situation as A and B, both in itself, as it would postulate an absolute synthesis of opposites under the conditions of its own determination or circumscription; as much as in relation to another element, say B', towards which it would be supposed to make its transition. If, here too, we were to postulate a new hierarchic level superior to A' and B', namely A'', which would be responsible for the community between A' and B', we would merely import the problem to this new level. Then, a new postulate of a new superior level would import the problem to the new level, and so on, *ad infinitum*. Thus, we would return to the problem of the string's actuality that, as can be seen, suffers from an infinite impossibility of transposing the actuality of the string from one level to another, regardless of what level and towards which direction. In short, the entire transposition of the string's actuality from one level to another would once again be reduced to pure possibility. But, since pure possibility is itself precisely this kind of formation of progressive actualization strings, and since it is itself a perpetual delay of the origin point or "bridgehead" of the

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[49] Of course, the transcendent identity that comprises A and B is in itself contradictory from a formal standpoint. For the exposition of some examples of how in real life we could find ourselves in the presence of contradictory states which present themselves as coincidences of opposites, see Graham Priest: *Doubt Truth to Be a Liar* (Priest, 2006, pp. 57-61).

first element that must be infinitely constituted and actualized from an infinity of elements in an infinite number of steps; and since these elements are also conditioned by other infinities of elements through other infinities of steps etc. etc., the result is that *pure possibility (Nihil privativum)*, taken on its own, without any external actualization principle, without any other active exterior actual agent that would instantiate these privative infinities through an actual infinite, is in fact pure impossibility, i.e., pure *Nothingness*, *Nihil negativum*. The pure possible taken on its own, absolutely in itself, reveals to be nothing else but the pure Impossible. (Hegel, 2010 [1832], pp. 191-194)

— This is the moment when potentialist (i.e., relativist) thought also brings forth its objection: after the emergence of this disjunction between determined elements, of this pure chasm of absolute negative that separates the elements in a final, absolute discontinuity, how can one still postulate the existence, the being, the synthesis of *the something*? How could one overcome this chasm, what sort of bridge or bridgehead could there exist to escape the abyss of complete suppression? Wouldn't relativity, potentiality, relation be preferable to such a ruthless suppression? The answer can only be negative: one cannot build castles and fortresses on sand. And the answer's negativity must be subject to metaphysical exhaustiveness: it is precisely *in the chasm*, *in the abyss*, *in the negative*, *in the impossible* that the redeeming answer is found. And this, as it is shown below, is precisely the principle of the Hegelian specularity.—[50]

4. We are shown here the reasons why postulating relativity as absolute is not only a contradiction in linguistic terms, but an ontologically reflected contradiction: i.e., it is impossibility in itself. It is not by accident that the propositions that resume the liar's paradox in various forms—"I am lying"—

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[50] As we have anticipated in a previous note, this answer is related to the issue of ontological and ideal transfiguration of the negative itself; only Christianity opened this horizon.

in order to attempt the accreditation of an absolute bending of all criteria— "Everything is relative", "The truth is relative", "There is no absolute truth", "There is no absolute", "Everything is subject to interpretation", "It is forbidden to forbid" etc. etc.—all fall into the ontological chasms of foundational, metaphysical sophisms.

When one believes that determination can immediately take the place of indetermination, or that the occurrence can immediately replace its actuality principle, or that a part, strictly speaking, can immediately stand in for the whole, we are already dealing with a paradox, in the best case scenario;[51] but when one postulates that the indeterminate, the principle or the whole itself does not even exist, then the paradox falls into sheer unspeculative self-contradiction,[52] and the sophistic aberration is complete.—

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[51] The paradox of the relationship between the whole and its parts is one of the most compelling cases for the justification of speculative thought, as it illustrates the unity of opposites: one-multiple, principle-occurrence, general-individual, universal-singular, identity-difference, whole-parts. Regardless of whether one speaks about the equipotency between the set of semicircles and that of diameters, already noted by Proclus, or of the equipotency between the cardinal of $\mathbb{N}$ and the cardinals of $\mathbb{Z}$, $\mathbb{Q}$ or $\mathbb{R}$, etc. (Becker, 1968 [1954], pp. 303-308, 338-347, 355-359; Munteanu, 1999, pp. 18-19), the logical and mathematical paradoxes reflect apodictically and eminently the need to overcome formal thought which is foundationally self-contradictory. But this cannot be accomplished in whatever way. The sophistry we reject here is not synonymous with speculative thought, precisely because it does not assume everything that results from the concepts it postulates. When the results contradict the premises, instead of undertaking the reappraisal of all elements, including those initially rejected, sophistry unequivocally manifests arbitrarily selective tendencies.—In the present case, rejecting transcendence or absolute identity—probably based on an initial naive inclination to preserve the thought apparently outside the possibilities of contradiction, videlicet, to preserve formalism—; this results in an even more serious dead end, entirely deprived of any solution, manifested through a self-contradiction of which one expects escaping either by abandoning it, either by arbitrariness. In other words, a self-contradiction that is thus inescapable.

[52] The fundamental condition of speculation is precisely the effective realness of the totality or of indeterminacy or of the whole (Hegel, 2018 [1807], p. 13; Hegel, 2010 [1832], pp. 61, 66-68).

If one claims that "everything is relative" or that "there is no absolute truth", four simultaneous self-contradictions occur that unequivocally and immediately cancel the proposition that has just been stated:

1. (from an ontological standpoint) any criteria that would distinguish the relative from the non-relative so as to provide us with the evidence that (absolute) truth does not exist, immediately vanishes.

2. (from an ontological standpoint) the relativist statement itself is also part of "everything"; but if this "everything" is relative, then the relativist statement is also relative, thus false, null. But then, if "everything is relative" is null, the consequence is that there is at least one thing that is not relative.

3. (from the perspective of the premises' criterion of truth) one cannot aim for the truth of a relativist statement unless one accepts that truth exists *a priori* (prerequisite to the articulation of the relativist statement), therefore not everything is relative. Thus, one already presumes that there is (an absolute) truth.

4. (from the perspective of the consequences' criterion of truth) in the very same instant when one claims to cancel absolute truth, one also claims that a relativist statement possesses absolute truth. Therefore, in addition to the fact that a relativist statement already presupposes the premise of (absolute) truth, it also immediately reclaims and reinstates it through its very cancellation.

Finally, some could see an objection in the self-contradictory circularity of the *liar's paradox* (let us recall it: if one supposes that the statement "I am lying" is false, then its content expresses precisely its falsity, thus the statement claiming it is consequently true; but, since the statement is now presumed to be true, then its content tells us precisely the truth about the statement, namely that the statement is false, thus the final conclusion of the entire statement is that it is true because it is false and it is false

because it is true). The objection would argue that, since the statement is undecidable from the standpoint of formal logic, one could thus invoke the very postulate of relative circularity as absolute within this very case. But here one would commit a transcendental illusion: the level of the intellect that detects the formal blockage would be mistaken for the level of the reason that detects the statement's discursive universe. And the discursive universe of the formal circular self-contradiction "I am lying" also presupposes the same truth or principle of identity: every time the statement oscillates between false and true, one presupposes the statement has a true meaning (as true or false or as true and false); and its self-contradictory content also falls under absolute speculative identity: it ***is*** self-contradictory.—

Concerning the relation between the elements of a string, respectively the mutual position of elements that should be in continuity with one another, Aristotle wrote in *Metaphysics*, XI, 1069a that continuity appears between two elements when

> I say that things are continuous when the boundary of each of them, by which they are in contact and held together, is one and the same, so that clearly continuity occurs in those things from which it is natural for some unity to arise by virtue of their contact. (Aristotle, 1998, p. 350)

It is evident that here the elements that come in a continuum have continuity by means of the limit that simultaneously separates and unites them. This presupposes or implies the very third-party position ("something unique") of absolute totality, of pure uniqueness, of transcendent identity of the string's elements. The elements cannot touch each other in the absence of such community, since the limit (which is already irrational or super-rational in itself) would have to be completely impenetrable not only between the two elements, but also in their internal reduction, completely suppressing their internal consistency. For the parts that make up these entities too are also clearly marked off one against the other. Moreover, if we speak about

macroscopic things, we see that the limit between them is maintained even when they touch, otherwise they would have to directly interpenetrate their substances. Even when the palm of one's hand is laid on the table and perceives its physical properties, there still is an absolute limit between the palm and the table preserved in an absolute distinction between the two elements; in the empiric sphere, this distinction is given as a physical potentiality.—On a microscopic or quantic level, this potentiality becomes ontological, because particles can fuse together under certain circumstances and between certain limits, which proves that here potentiality is, however, not pure, but still a determined one. Yet, neither pure Potentiality could eliminate the original ontological disjunction, since Potentiality in itself is the external overlapping between Being and Nothingness.

Resuming, then, the question of ontological foundation, it is unveiled that the first step that *representation-thought* (**immediate** representation thought, to be precise) can take to speak about foundation can only be the meontological one: the only place it reaches is ***Nothingness*** (Hegel, 2018 [1807], pp. 36-37; Hegel, 2010 [1832], p. 10). To see this result, we are left with no choice but to resume the issue of the infinite string of elements, but regressively, in the opposite direction.

1. Thus, a certain element, a being, A, is given. A is composed of the "quantum" of being (let us call it A') and of the ontological differences and negations that determine it, i.e., separate it from other elements and separate its properties and sides from one another.

2. We focus our attention on A', namely on the positive content elements, respectively the "quanta" of positive predications pertaining to the being, that tell us what A is. We reach the conclusion that these elements, in turn, are also, first of all, different from one another and, secondly, composed of other elements: namely, A' is made up of A'' and its inherent differences.

3. We direct our attention to A''. In turn, A'' is made up of A''' and the inherent differences... Etc. Etc. Etc.

If we wish, however, to find out which is the first point of absolute *initium* of the first instantiation in this infinite string of being, we only have at our disposal the following onto-logical ramifications:

α. Postulating an original Being that would no longer be able to be reduced to other component elements.[53] The only difficulty is that such a being is conceived here through **dianoia**, namely, through *immediate representation*. This is why such a being presents itself as a purely dogmatically postulated entity, without understanding the conditions or the attributes of its actuality. This raises two questions:

    i. **What makes it be**, as such?[54]

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[53] We are hereby reminded of **Definitions I** and **II** from Spinoza's *Ethics* (Spinoza, 2002, p. 217). But there is a double difficulty in Spinoza's case. Firstly, since Nothingness itself can claim a deeper "degree" of (me)ontological immediacy than Being, Spinoza does not provide sufficient explanations as to why he chooses Being instead of Nothingness. Secondly, since after postulating infinite Substance, Spinoza firstly admits the infinitely absolute plurality of attributes for the infinite absolute originary Substance, then the plurality of the Substance's modes, one does not understand what is the source of this multiplicity of attributes and modes. Multiplicity cannot be given without difference, and the difference is essentially negation. This brings us back to the issue of Nothingness about which Spinoza mentions nothing in his writings. With the exception of the case in which the abstraction of the infinite absolute Substance itself would represent the foundation for an absolute reductive overlap between Substance and two of its fundamental modes: presence and absence, being and nothingness. Which is a step undertaken by Hegel who later proposes this approach by clearly stating that metaphysics must restart from the point where Spinoza left it. (Hegel, 2018 [1807], p. 12; Hegel, 1990 [1833], pp. 163-165)

[54] This is the instance where any positivist intellect can afford the classical interrogative error as an "objection" against the argument of the "First Mover" or the "First Cause": "And who or what created or caused God?" The question is mistaken because it presumes the discursive horizon of *immediate representation* within which it also expects a solution to its interrogation.

ii. Hoes does one get from ***a pure Being to determined beings***? Such a transition presupposes an absolute ontological difference. But a pure Being has no negations and, being, seemingly, absolute, it is not compatible with the concept of an exteriority that would provide us with the source of this negation either. If we chose to postulate, purely and simply, such a negative or nothingness as a counterpart, as an instance opposed to Being, out of a mere dialectical spirit, we would end up in the arbitrary and opaque situation of not finding any onto-logical legitimacy for the source of this negation, the postulate thus being unjustifiable.

β. Why should we uncritically postulate, at the end of the foundation of the strings of determinations a pure Being, since every positive element, every "quantum" of presence in every determination proved to be a negative entity, in fact, because, since it was marked by its own negations, every element was decomposable, deconstructible? Therefore, everything here will be exhaustively reduced to Nothingness.

IV. The Homonymy of the Negative
reveals Absolute Indeterminate Immediacy

Pure original Being

A. Resuming the onto-logical ramifications that ended the previous chapter, we may say that in order to respond to **β.** we need to first check the metaphysical coherence of point **α.** with its two implications: **i.** being is given as absolutely originary and pure, thus clear of any negative; **ii.** the passing from pure originary Being to determined being is either unexplainable, either founded in Emanationism, but in the latter case, there should no longer exist any determined, mortal being; and the very concept of "emanation" would be equally problematic, since the difference presupposed by the change of Being into emanation would be just as unintelligible. Or there would not even be any difference, thus emanation wouldn't exist either.

We will start from the end and go to the beginning.

α. ii'. If the original Being is pure and without negation, then determinate being is either unexplainable (even impossible), or it is an emanation from the originary Being, but then one cannot explain, however, its determination and, thus, the very principle of differentiation in emanation.[55] (Hegel, 1895, II, pp. 133-134)

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[55] This is the fundamental issue of Neoplatonism which, on the one hand, cannot explain the inner mechanism of Difference or of the Negative. On the other, precisely because of the first shortcoming, namely, that any derived instance is inscribed in a hierarchy, in a degenerating order.—At best, Plotinus argues that, if the inferior and derived elements form a relationship and pass from one state to another "sending forth as much of themselves as they can" to their environment and generating or producing effects, how could the Principle, the One remain closed in itself and not

Possible objections would argue that: **1.** determined being is an illusion; **2.** the determination of Being is an illusion. (Hegel, 1895, II, pp. 133-134, 167)

In other words, the objection would claim that the ontological difference is an illusion. We have already discussed this sophistic contradiction: *if we have illusion, then we have ontological difference.* The illusion is impossible if there are no ontological differences or at least the possibility of ontological differences. Illusion itself consists in the variance between two elements (usually, subject and object or essence and appearance). For, if there is no difference between them, how could illusion be possible?

Consequently, regardless of whether we say that the determination of Being is an illusion, or that any "concurrent" or exterior existence to original Being is an illusion, illusion confirms and reveals the ontological Difference, namely the negative or, if we wish, Nothingness.

The next question arising here would be an attempt to clarify the relation between Being and Nothingness.

α. ii''. If we reached the conclusion that Nothingness is real (or that Nothingness, in J. Lacan's words, "is inscribed in the Real"), then we must understand the two possible hypotheses we could formulate: **1.** Being and Nothingness are ontologically opposed to each other, so they represent an absolute dualism; (Hegel, 1895, II, pp. 69-77) **2.** Being and Nothingness are in a different kind of mutual position. And solving this hypothesis depends on the way in which we conceive the substance of Being itself (α. i.), respectively the void of Nothingness (β.).

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give itself over too, how could it not generate or beget or produce effects too? But this sending forth, this begetting, this overflowing and its results are, in Plotinus's case, degenerating, as no occurrence of Difference is of the same being or rank as its Origin, though every occurrence is the Origin's copy (Plotinus, 2018, pp. 548-550, 576-578: V, §5.2.1 (11), §5.4.1 (7)).

1. Dualism implies exterior equivalence or the parity between Being and Nothingness.[56] If Being and Nothingness are (externally) equivalent, then they **a.** intermix with each other, they are interchangeable. If they are at parity, then they **b.** combine in an infinite complexity.

a. In the first case, where Being and Nothingness are equivalent and thus, interchangeable, the third-party horizon of their unity appears directly, respectively the horizon of the intermediary element that allows their intermixing. Since this third element contains both, it can be neither one nor the other. So it is a form of absolute indifference. However, since this indifference means absence of any multiplicity, Being and Nothingness immediately disappear. And the only "result" (result of our endeavor; ontologically, the third element is a foundation or a premise, not a result) is the **Absolute Indeterminate Immediacy**. (Hegel, 2010 [1832], p. 51)

b. In the second case, we return to the presupposition of an infinite string of determinations we have already examined. But here we can rebuild the demonstration by supposing that there is a third term that enables the transition or translation from one multiplicity level to the other and maintains Being and Nothingness simultaneously as different and identical. This third element reveals itself as a consequence of the common discursive universe of both Being and Nothingness, on the one hand; on the other, it appears as a consequence of the difference between Being and Nothingness, a difference that would not belong to either of them (otherwise, they would be indistinct and no transition would be needed any more). Once this postulate is reached, then, on the one hand, the situation previously anticipated in **β.** is already underway. Specifically, we would deal with a multiple reciprocal shifting

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[56] The mythical and theological scenarios that correspond to such a concept can be found in Zoroastrianism, Manichaeism and Taoism. Even though Taoism, on the one hand, implies dualism rather on a cosmological level; on the other, the transcendent unity of *yin* and *yang* is absolutely indeterminate, apophatic and evokes the indeterminate identity of opposites (Lao Tzu, 1989, pp. 51-55, 60-61).

between quanta of being and quanta of differences; but each level of positive or actual quanta would prove to be reducible or deconstructible by virtue of its inner and outer determination. And to make the duality intelligible to the end, the only logical continuation is, on the other hand, the investigation regarding the pure Being itself, meaning section **α. i**.

2. Other types of positions can be those in which **a.** either Being, **b.** or Nothingness have a position regarded as ascendant or privileged in relation to the other.

a. But if Being has a privileged position, then we have a situation in which it is infinitely absolute, and Nothingness becomes only an infinitesimal "perimeter", comprised and surrounded by Being on all "sides" (Octavian, 2003, pp. 21-22).—Certain species of Gnosticism can be indicated as belonging to this perspective (Culianu, 2002 [1990], pp. 263-285; Manolache, 2000, pp. 162-167; Grozea, 2001, pp. 97-124). In fact, this situation is implied by the presupposition of marking off Being through the negative it rejects. As Being is infinitely actual absolute, then no difference between the whole and its parts is given in its substance. The consequence is that Being is already marked off entirely, compromised by the infinitesimal negative it rejects *ad infinitum*, but which constantly consumes it in this ontological rejection. However, since any source of Being is already marked off by the rejected negative, there is no origin or any purely homogenous point of Being unmarked by the negative that Being is supposed "to fight" sisyphically to overcome. Every "quantum" or particle of Being is itself a sum of negations, therefore no quantum of Being can actually escape the monstrous gravity of the negative chasm. Thus, Being is not consumed, but it has already been immediately consumed by the negative. And it presents itself as a chasm without substance as well, and it is directly and eternally reduced to its own abysmal void.

b. If Nothingness has a privileged position, the situation is not any less precarious. A Being that would be assumed as subsisting in an ocean of

Nothingness would immediately succumb into absolute ontological erosion.[57] Its very substance would have to be actualized or established on a foundation other than its presence in the meontological ocean and thus one would have to seek yet again a solution of a third kind. Contrary, Being would immediately disappear, immediately overwhelmed by the devouring Nothingness, an ontological erasure befalling with absolute immediation. Hence, since the foundation here is the Absolute, Being would not have ever been actualized and everything is, again, reduced to Nothingness. (Hegel, 1895, II, pp. 50-51)

Therefore, we see that every supposition from **α. ii.** ends in Nothingness. This is the fate of (*immediate*) *representation-thought*. It cannot conceive the entities it refers to without engaging them through forms that already comprise ontologically complex or disjunctive multiplicities, which cannot hold any position in relation to their origin other than the one of a derived, exterior element that is ultimately irrational. In other words, *immediate representation* did not complete the phenomenological and ontological reduction through which it could aim for an unconfusing, truly irreducible, elementary foundation. (Hegel, 2010, pp. 30-31 (§ 3))

More precisely, the very concept of Being that this type of thought engages is one vitiated by the uncritically presumed transcendental appearance of the premises of thought and the transcendental illusion of the conditions of any possible experience, defects that predetermine knowing as marked by the ontological heteronomy of subject, object and their foundation and as such has dramatic consequences for any endeavor it inspires. (Biard, et al., 1981, p. 9; Hegel, 2010, pp. 31-31 (§ 3))

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[57] Ancient cosmogonist mythologies often draw upon the image of an indeterminate ocean from which an initial element singles itself out.—For the ancient Greeks, Chaos/Nyx was the original indetermination from which Uranus and Gaea spontaneously emerge.— Beyond the onto-logical (thus also intuitive) impossibility of such spontaneous punctual self-actualizations occurring out of Privation, one must note that such scenarios are the immediate ways in which thought immersed in *immediate representation* has managed to irrationally settle the super-rational.

B. α.i. Here, the question that undoubtedly arises is the one regarding Being, as above formulated: ***what*** precisely ***makes Being be***, as such?

Normally, Being is *immediately supposed*: a presence, an act, something that is *in the here and now* or "*in general*". (Hegel, 1895, III, pp. 8-9) This means that it presents itself as continuity or as elementary continuum without interruptions. Any *distinctive point* of Being, analyzed in itself, leads to this idea of irreducibility of the **abstract being** that essentially *maintains it* (Hegel, 2010 [1832], pp. 211-213): disjoint from itself, *ad infinitum*, its abstract positing could never be terminally suppressed, since it is infinitely actually present in all its parts and any analysis of the *ens* of the "quantum" of being (however infinitesimal), could not, in fact, go past the first element, because it would be united, perichoretically and immediately integrated, yet extensively, with the infinite string of quanta of being set as its foundation.[58] So the presence content, the being consistency of the quantum would be in itself unlimited, unbound, therefore irreducible. Or, conversely, the analysis of the first quantum would immediately contain the analysis of the entire infinite string, because no difference between one quantum and another, between one part and the whole, are given in being, such that any part contains, in fact, the whole with the entirety of its multiplicity. In other words, the infinite disjunction of abstract being in the multiplicity of its constituting elements would never end; similarly, disjunction would be unable not only to go past the first quantum, but not even to instantiate its first *initium* point, both because of the impenetrability of an *absolute infinite* string and **of the pure impossibility to locate or to apprehend such oneness effectively, yieldingly, concretely**. This idea is usually directly expressed through the

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[58] The Eleatic principle of the indivisibility of Being. An infinitesimally "small part" of Being is the whole of Being. "Summing up" the diversity that lies in such a pure identity-with-itself is instantaneous, absolutely immediate; namely, it does not occur, nor will it occur, nor has it ever occurred; ***for it is given as such, already con-summated, without ever having been summed up per se***.—This principle was later resumed and theologically confirmed in the Judeo-Christian tradition.

logical formula of identity: A≡A or A=A. At any rate, it is the **identity** that **Being** is equated with.

Concerning this idea, some interpretations have tried to eliminate the concept of multiplicity contained implicitly in the idea of identity or continuum, arguing that multiplicity pertains only to our (*immediate*) *representation*. In its essence, Being and, implicitly, identity, are *absolute immediacy*. But once we speak of absolute immediacy, it is impossible to keep speaking of Being and identity. (Hegel, 1895, III, pp. 30-31; Hegel, 2010 [1832], pp. 51-52, 68-69, 75-76) For they precisely inhere in *presence*, in *actuality*; in other words, they irreducibly suppose **something manifest**, **even though enstatic**, and what is manifest is, at the same time, **differentiated, therefore in an ontological extension *with itself, regardless of how immediate or co-interior this identity or extension is***. This means continuum or equality, or any other name of such meaning that we would want to use. Yet this extension is irreducibly a **multiplicity**, even though the ontological caesura between the multiples is here suspended or eliminated or transformed in any way.

This leads us to the fundamental issue in this matter: what is the immediate, fundamental point, the initial quantum (in whatever sense or direction would it be considered) that represents the essence of this Being or identity? But, more importantly, what is given "before" this quantum, "before" the "first extension" or instantiation of it?[59]

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[59] A question that does not coincide with the atheist question: "Who or what has created or caused God?". For the simple reason that here we have overcome the positivist thought that phantasmatically identifies determinations everywhere and that inheres in immediate representational thought. And which, consequently, implies as answer to its question (addressed, with an unconscious self-assured vanity, to the void itself) nothing but an infinite string of interconditioned determinations. Namely, it supposes the very ontological relativism of the infinite string of determinations that has been previously analyzed and which we have just proven as impossible above in section 1.1. And when, with the purpose of overcoming the impossibility of this

Such a hyper-analysis leads to this conclusion: the extension, the consistency, or the substance of pure Being consists, essentially, in ***the absolute and immediate transmutative revelation of the negative as affirmative; this is given as an absolute and immediate coincidence of the negative with itself in its absolute lack of coincidence with itself or with anything else***. In Hegel's method this revelation is rather a ***revealing conversion*** of the negative into affirmative which contains the premises that the negative is real and active and it is consummated by being driven to its ultimate, thus, contradictory, thus, speculative consequences. We will briefly resume the arguments for this conclusion:

1. Being is something *manifest*, therefore *extensive*.

2. Extension means multiplicity, and the manifest means differentiation. (Hegel, 2018 [1807], pp. 37-43)

3. Differentiation and multiplicity already suppose the negative, i.e., the ontological rejection by which at least two elements are maintained as ultimately disjoint, never overlapping. (Hegel, 2010 [1832], pp. 45-48)

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string (perceivable even intuitively), the atheist intellect believes that it experiences, in turn, a form of immediacy or exhaustion, in fact it does not presume to place it anywhere else but within **determined being** grossly apprehendable through empirical "immediacy". Therefore, it sacrifices even its very own phenomenological reduction through which it could devise a form of mystery or transcendence however imprecise. What this drive brings forth is nothing but the absolute futility of questions such as the one above.—

We anticipate here the fact that, at the end of our endeavor, after having reached the criterion of effectiveness and immediacy, we will indeed find in **our empirical immediate world** the **presentification** of Being as directly accessible, but, however, not directly comprehensible and apprehendable. The world's determined things, those we can perceive with our sensitive intuition, are indeed a true form in which we partake of Substance. They are a genuine sign of Immediacy. But this sign is not self-sufficient and, consequently, it is not immediately apprehendable and intuitively perceivable in the entire absolute infinite string of its ontological instauration. Such apprehension could only be the object of an intellectual intuition or of a metaphysical speculation. Thus, positivism turns out to be nothing but the erroneous result of a flaw in transcendental topology and intentionality.—

4. This negative would precisely have the implication of a complex substance such as an infinite string of elements and levels—a paradigm that has shown itself to be false in section 1.1 of this text. The essential feature of such a structure of ontological or pyramidal ordering is the infinite delaying of its own overall actuality and of any of its levels in particular by its foundation's adjournment from one level to the other.

5. But pure Being does not manifest such symptoms: the elements contain one another, but not hierarchically, pyramidally, orderly etc., but *perichoretically*, they overlap in a pure and absolute extensive and self-transparent singularity; the transition from one element to another in this multiplicity does not raise the difficulty of overcoming the boundary, the interstitial ontological exteriority, since the transition has already been made and given without having actually ever to be accomplished, since the elements are identical in the infinity of their foundation and instantiation. However, since Being does undoubtedly possess an extension, it is something manifest and present, thus it contains multiplicity—***the elements of this multiplicity are utterly different from one another***. However, although their difference is real and irreducible, it is simultaneously and analytically constituted as ***a simultaneous absolute infinite overlapping of all their parts and of all their inner elements, thus all elements being each other as an immediate one***. (Saint John of Damascus, 1999 [1958], pp. 176-177; Sfîntul Maxim Mărturisitorul, 1990, pp. 69-78; Maximus Confessor, 1985, pp. 147-148; Saint Gregory Palamas, 1988, pp. 117-119).—For the same reading, see St. Anselm of Canterbury:

> 18. (...) Therefore there are no parts in You, Lord; neither are You many, but You are so much one and the same with Yourself that in nothing are You dissimilar with Yourself. Indeed You are unity itself not divisible by any mind. (Anselm of Canterbury, 1998, p. 98)

—Thus, the difference does not reveal discontinuities or these discontinuities are "closed up" and "filled up" by and in themselves with Being or as Being and they articulate an absolute continuum of those respective elements.

6. Moreover, if we pursue to the end the absolute coincidence of pure Being's elements, if the absolutely and perichoretic identical multiplicity of the substance of pure Being is seen in its essential nature, in its condition of absolute actuality, the absolute concept of the identity of elements, placed in the (over)borderline horizon of its own superlative, immediately leads to *pure immediacy* in which the condition of overlapping for overlapped elements is already completed (without ever having to be completed). For they are not given as identical, but they have already been given as such in absolute (Hegel, 2010 [1832], pp. 59-60). Their identity is not extensively summed up, but it is already given in the pure anteriority of the absolute immediacy.

7. *The only conclusion compatible with these findings is the immediate overlapping tautology, the absolute and original coincidence between Identity and Difference*. Thus, responding to the second question, "what is given before the first quantum of presence of perichoretic actuality?"— it is this **absolute coincidence between Identity and Difference**.

Nevertheless, the concept of this ultimate overlap is unreachable unless one is willing to analyze Difference itself in its very own concept, hence, to continue with our (me)ontological reduction already disclosed in the Preamble's preceding sections. All the more so as considering that even inside pure Being, as analyzed here, the Foundation proves to be an essence fundamentally originated only from Difference (thus, Negation, thus Absence, thus Nothingness) (Hegel, 2010 [1832], pp. 51-52) absolutely "converted" (i.e., revealed) in itself as affirmation, presence, being, identity, continuum.— Namely, the revelation here is that Being already presents itself to us as Nothingness immediately reverted or absolutely reflected in itself, absolutely

and immediately prior to any other reversion or reflection (Hegel, 1895, III, pp. 22, 28-32, 35-37; Hegel, 2010 [1832], pp. 59-60, 337-338); and this occurs precisely because **this Nothingness is not privative, nor has it ever been**. Some kind of absolutely self-differentiated Difference in the immediacy of its own prior identity or an absolute Difference of Difference in relation to the identically absolute immediacy differentiated prior to differentiation itself. Therefore, some kind of a pure and absolute, apophatic and exhaustive Transcendence of the (non)*something* which appeared in the original texts of metaphysical or theological thought as the superlative of absolute Indeterminateness.[60] The absolute and transcendent void deprived not only of determinations, but of the presence of any *something*, anything manifest, thus of anything in the absolute, leads to an absolute withdrawal in the pure immediacy which, being completed in itself absolutely self-differen-tiately beyond any multiple, is the absolute and transcendent plenitude of over-determinateness,[61] that is the immediately absolute ontological con-dition for the *something* or for that which is given as manifest. As already cleared above, we can call this the (***Absolute) Indeterminate Immediacy***. This concept will be briefly developed below.

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[60] Here, the final intuition of the transcendence of radical indeterminateness seems to be ecumenical. Although its every cultural postulation had very different, sometimes opposite, doctrinal, speculative and ideological consequences in the works of the authors we passingly mention here: Lao Tse; Plato (*Parmenides*, *The Sophist*); Plotinus; Adi Śankarāchārya (*Advaita Vedanta*); Sf. Dionysus the Areopagite; Sf. Gregory of Nyssa; Sf. Basil the Great; Sf. Cyril of Alexandria; Sf. John Chrysostom; Sf. Maximus the Confessor; Sf. Symeon the New Theologian; Meister Eckhart; Nicholas of Cusa; J.G. Fichte; F.W.J. Schelling; G.W.F. Hegel. The cultural adversity of the above doctrinal implications can be ascribed to subjective historical failures. However, the primal originary intuition of radical Indeterminateness can be understood as munificence of a transcendent donation.

[61] Or of the **To Be**. (Octavian, 2003, pp. 20-21, 26-30)

Originary actual "Nothingness" or the over-Being:
Absolute Indeterminate Immediacy

β. We will start here by the speculative experiment of the **β.** version: the ontological and phenomenological reduction is taken to the complete exhaustion of any quantum of Being, a Being that is "dissolved" or revealed in its originally immediate substance as Nothingness. We will briefly examine the presupposition of this Nothingness.[62]

Here, we will firstly discuss the supposition of the over-determination of the absolute Impossible[63] that bears the absolutely immediate and irreducible premise both for the void of Nothingness and the continuum of Being.—The concept that presents itself as such a premise is that of the ***Absolute Indeterminate Immediacy***. (Ahlers, 1975, p. 263)

The ***Absolute Indeterminate Immediacy*** appeared as the point of absolute *initium* of the pure extensive Being, as we have shown above. The same point also appears at the outset of Nothingness's concept analysis: Nothingness itself, as Absence or Negation, usually appears as an intensive void through which one can glimpse an emptiness, but a "consistent" emptiness—*representation* attempts to intuit here a certain form of the purely void and absolutely abstract "a-dimensionality" or "intension" or "punctuality". It is the reverse of Being, an analytic-reductive mode of referring to the multiple of Being. Although intuitively closer to the concept of ***Immediacy***, Nothingness is itself here given as a mediation of a collapse or a fundamental destruction that leaves behind the inexistent surface of an implosion of the

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[62] To be as clear as possible and remove any source of confusion, it must be said that there are not two types of absolute immediate and (over)apophatic Nothingness. But here we speak about the ***Indeterminate Immediacy*** as root or as pure un-beginning, which, in dogmatic Trinitarian theology, was expressed through the common Nature of the Hypostases.

[63] Let us not forget J. Lacan's words: „L'impossible c'est le Réel" (Lacan, 2001, pp. 422, 425, 431, 449, 452, 454).

deep when it is thus conceived, as "a-dimensionality" or absolutely void and abstract "intension". (Rohs, 1972, p. 58) Paraphrasing Hegel, it can be said that the Nothingness just obtained here is the Nothingness of the elements whose annulment originated it. Yet precisely because it was obtained by the annulment of pure and absolute Being, rather than of the world, the Nothingness obtained by suppressing Being preserves the converse effect of the meontological lack of extension. Thus, a form of mediation. In order to reach immediacy itself, any form of (*immediate*) *representation* must be eliminated and only thus the suppression of the concept of Nothingness itself is reached. (Hegel, 2010 [1832], pp. 71-73) That which emerges then is nothing but pure and absolutely prior averting of reference and non-reference: ***Absolute Indeterminate Immediacy***.[64]

Thus, if the two concepts, Being and Nothing, both appear as mediated, one through the immediate extension of the multiple, the other through the immediate collapse of the infinitesimally self-devouring fragmentation, then their common origin can only be the ***Absolute Indeterminate Immediacy***.

We have observed earlier that the reason why pure Being is a pure and absolute continuum is due to the absolute immediate reflection of Nothingness.

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[64] Also, speaking about the last hypotheses of modern (even postmodern) cosmology, we see in the attempts made by string theory, for instance, the claim to start from zero premises and to postulate a so-called "nothingness" as foundation of the original phenomenal world. However, as soon as one investigates what is understood in cosmology through this "nothingness", one discovers that it is in fact a determined instantiation, with a hyperphysical phenomenology which manifests certain states subject to mathematical description. Generally speaking, the "nothingness" of physicists does not go beyond the concept of spatial or hyper-spatial void; and some of them have vacuous difficulties in understanding the differences between phenomena such as trans-specific causality or biological or quantic potentiality, on the one hand, and **absolute** genesis from **nothingness**, on the other (Krauss, 2012, pp. 73-74, 148-149). Such that this "nothingness" is not genuine **Nothingness** at all, but rather a more peculiar physical hyper-space.

If this is the case—and our endeavor has apodictically brought us to this point—, the main issue of the whole discussion is precisely that of the **absolute transmutation** of Nothingness, the nature of **its absolute reflection**. Yet, since this very Nothingness has been reduced itself too as an absolute mediated non-element in its immediacy of opposition against Being, what must be discussed is not the absolute reflection of Nothingness, be it absolute, as obtained through ontological fragmentation, but the **self-division of the pure unbeginning** of the *Indeterminate Immediacy* as the pure point of *initium* for any original mediation, be it meontological too.

How can Nothingness reveal itself as an element of positiveness and set the original ontological continuum, instead of being the exponent of pure and absolute meontological dissolution, therefore of pure impossibility? In the absence of an intellectual (mystical) intuition, the answer to this question can only be ascertained somewhat schematically in the speculative analytics of the **Indeterminate Immediacy**.[65]

During this endeavor, the thought regarding the steps of the brief speculative dialectic discussed above was essentially limited to *immediate representation*. Thereby, every time a concept was articulated, the object designated by the concept represented a form of extension or substantiation: *representation* is by definition marked by the need of something concretely manifested, regardless of whether the object is or not radically abstract, in

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[65] Patristics never ceases to warn us against any endeavor of conceiving the Absolute Essence by untransfigured human thought. On the other hand, the same Patristics also uses arguments and human language and concepts through which, in response to heresies, formulates the articulation of the mystery. We believe that those precautions primarily address human *hubris*, which we hope to have left behind. Not least, the warning also refers to the adequacy of thought to an absolute Transcendence only evoked in the interjections of superlatives that merely deepen this distance. But we do not claim here to formulate a more detailed or more daring endeavor than the one already discovered by Patristical authors.

relation to empirical sensitivity—as is the case with the concept of pure Being or pure Nothingness.

But once we encountered the concept of **Indeterminate Immediacy**, we may witness the complete suppression of any form of instantiation of anything manifest, of substance itself.

One may also find in Hegel such radical over-terminality, but as it ensues from the pages of the *Science of Logic*, it occurs somehow against the grain in relation to author's accents, after initially having been correctly addressed already starting with the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, in whose **Preface** this concept is recurrently articulated. When Hegel discusses the pure unity between Being and Nothingness, he indicates that they are simultaneously absolutely different. However, their difference is, actually, *ineffable* (or *unsayable*, to use the translator's choice) (Hegel, 2010 [1832], p. 68). Thus, what is given, in fact, is their absolute identity and the fact that one passes into the other, while their difference remains unapprehendable; if one is to believe certain critical interpretations regarding Hegelianism, it would even remain without consequences. It is precisely this unapprehendable or unsayable originary instantiation that represents the ultimate drive of the speculative discourse in general and of Hegel's discourse in particular (Hegel, 2010 [1832], pp. 59-69).

Substance, or that which is manifest, is defined through the mediation of its *enstasis* or presentification. In other words, they are units, therefore (perichoretical, ultimately) syntheses of multiples. Thus, they are results, or if we wish, products of a primary activity belonging to a foundation horizon that, in its radical nature, cannot be merely an already established transmission of the manifest. But **pure and Absolute Indeterminate Immediacy** means the finality of suppressing any kind of content, extension, intension, dimensionality, a-dimensionality, singularity, unity, multiplicity, fragmentation, void, non-intentionality or substance. (Ahlers, 1975, p. 264)

We therefore speak about the complete, radical, ontological disappearance of the **something** and of the **non-something** or about the absolute freedom from the horizon of any kind or of any stasis.[66]

The absolute withdrawal from what is manifest into what is non-manifest, or rather into something over-manifest[67] leads to the suppression

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[66] In modernity, Karl Barth (Barth, 1964, pp. 179-201 & sqq) is the one who raised the issue of the complete renunciation of any postulate concerning a positive knowledge of God. Sophistically overemphasizing God's absolute freedom from any instantiation and intelligibility, under the pretext of the super-intelligibility that is so often posited in the texts of the Christian tradition, Barth is willing to accept that all dogmatic formulations are nothing but pure voluntary relations of God to man. In Himself, the Transcendent could not be postulated through any kind of predication, however superlative, and regardless of the level of transcendence entailed by the predication. Thus, God definitively disappears and what appears in His place is a horizon of pure and absolutely unrelated will of God that resembles more arbitrariness than providence, more chance than liberty, more some kind of preferential accident than the originary Event that Barth is constantly invoking as initiating its determined and purely random communicability (the doctrine of the Holy Trinity becomes some kind of optional revelation, thus a version out of an absolute infinity) towards an equally accidental creature. Thesis that reinstates the ancient absolute distance between an absolute *deus otiosus* and a creature lost in its own foundational darkness, a result of the Darkness of a non-Foundation.

We believe that it is much too easily forgotten in this doctrine that any postulate of such a radical Transcendence already creates the premises of a super-hypostatisation, because this very radical Difference will be marked in itself at the same moment and by the same movement by which it will absolutely differ from this marking. Which already calls upon Identity, no matter how over-determined. But we will investigate this dogmatic paralogism that retains only one side of the absolute movement in another study (Barth, 1964, pp. 236-242; Scrima, 2005, pp. 61-99).

[67] It has been argued in favor of using antinomic terms in discussions regarding apophatic transcendence (Hegel, 1895, III, pp. 13-23, 30-31). At the same time, the terms using the idea of superlative (by possibly adding the prefix *hyper*) are demoted to establishing objective determinations, since they analytically entail the idea of correlation with something inferior (Scrima, 2005, pp. 66-69, 77-81). In the above circumstance, choosing a formula that uses the superlative prefix does not indicate superiority in relation to an inferior category, but it means a fundamental coincidence between principle and occurrence, or better, said, between the principle and itself. It should

of all reference, therefore to the impossibility of common phatic access to this realm of ontological contiguity which is so concealed that not even the mystery of apophatism appears as satisfactory.[68] Rather, any mode of expression regarding the **Indeterminate Immediacy** will be a type of approximation in which the terminality of both representation and concept will occur, because within the **Indeterminate Immediacy** occurs the absolute suppression or are played the stakes of its own "conditions" of (im)possibility. In a proper sense, the **Indeterminate Immediacy** cannot be enlightened not even through the concept of absence or void, because the absence and the void are terms with an implicitly correlative meaning.[69] They lead to the meaning of suppressing **something**, which immediately entails *determination*, since it is spoken of the absence of *something* from a background or from a matrix or a membrane that is supposed to contain it or to which it is supposed to

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hereby be emphasized that the focus is on the *transcendent* identity of the principle with itself, all the more so since the essence of the language used in this text regarding the concept of **Indeterminate Immediacy** is built on the notion of speculative antinomy, as can be seen. Also in this antinomy that conveys the concept of immediacy, any of the versions expressing the absolutely immediate and indeterminate "apophatism" is equal to any other.—*See also* A. Bereschi: **Afterword** (Cusanus, 2008b, pp. 575-576).

[68] Apophatism underlines God's indeterminateness by cancelling the predicates; but the divine over-Being still remains here as well as a self-established **something**, an abyss of Being. (Hegel, 1895, III, pp. 26, 30-31) Yet, the **Absolute Indeterminate Immediacy** is the pure anteriority of the non- or the over-non-establishment. Theologically, it only corresponds to the Hypostatical Origin or, in dogmatic terms, to the unknowable "abysses" "in the bosom of the Father" (John 1:18, KJV, Hegel, 1895, III, pp. 13-31)

[69] J. Derrida appears to have taken the same path in his text *Différance*—the same pure and non-correlative suppression, the same absolute search for a unity without object; the same rejection even of apophatism, because it wouldn't be "radical enough". However, Derrida's endeavor turns against his own intent when, from the "empty" sealed "tomb" of speech, *la différance* suddenly appears as… "temporization and spacing"—videlicet, from the trans-ontological towering of absolute rarefaction, he ends up making an unsuccessful crash landing in the realm of determined being where onticity is immediately founded within the formal conditions of the transcendental subject's intuition (time and space) (Derrida, 1972, pp. 6-9).

return; it does not lead to the idea of absolute suppression of anything, therefore of the matrix itself too, or of any kind of membrane or background. The **Indeterminate Immediacy** is the absolute and pure suppression, without remnant, thus without any possibility of reopening the vanished elementariness within the instantiations that comprised it or within similar ones. Simultaneously, the **Indeterminate Immediacy** is the absolute pre-instantiation of unassignable, absolute and pure presence without priority of any other, without extension, as absolute terminality of the absolute prior unbegun absolutely immediate beginning and exhaustive achievement of immediation, thus, of ground as unattainable open impossibility. Within **Indeterminate Immediacy**, one finds the definitive consumption of any substantiation and the compression of the absolute evanescence of any abstract intension, regardless of how narrowly confined "imprisoning", void and a-dimensional it might be; a terminal consumption that only reveals the transcending grounding of annulment of nothing as pure and unassignable presence. Within **Indeterminate Immediacy** both Being and Nothingness simply disappear in the overshadowing and unconcealed light of the non-margins of a non-abyss tighter than the sealed, never opened fissure of its own suppression.

There is no "moment" where **Indeterminate Immediacy** would fail to be absolute immediacy. Thus, absolute suppression is not given in the **Indeterminate Immediacy**, but it was never given, such that it has already been given in the non-suppression of the immediate absence of nothing. This suppression of unsuppressed suppression is the preceding point of the pure non-foundation as non-absence of the already suppressed absence and absolutely devoid of any passage. This pure immediacy, this unaltered stasis absolutely withdrawn in the perfect lack of content of a boundless realm which does not exist because it circumscribes no presence, no content, is its very conclusion before any beginning; a conclusion from which an eternal beginning springs through the deepening of the ineffable sealing of the

unBeginning.[70]—After all, it is both vapid and necessary to go over these language exhaustions through which we attempt to (dis)articulate the "normal perception" of substantiated and substantiating thought. But the radical overcoming or the death of *representation* compels us to breathe the substantiated ether's voidness collapse of the predicative meaning speech form.—

This immediate unbegun collapse is immediately identical to itself, for no mediation disturbs its stasis. But it is the absolute self-division and self-mediation in itself, because it is immediately given as something immediate absolutely before its own immediacy:

> Now, as a result the stable being of existence is self-equality or the pure abstraction, is the abstraction of itself from itself, or it is itself its own inequality with itself and its own dissolution— its own inwardness and withdrawal into itself—its coming-to-be. (Hegel, 2018 [1807], p. 34)

—The concept of "immediacy" is crucial here, because it simultaneously presumes both the pure immediateness of pure coincidence, and the absolute immediateness of the collapse of immediacy itself as coincident instantiation, prior to actual collapse. Since it is precisely the impossibility to obtain content, something manifest or substantiated that indicates the immutable suppression of self-instantiation, thus its immediate exhaustion as prior to itself.

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[70] The Western texts or authors who examine in more general, scattered or more specific terms the issue of the **Indeterminate Immediacy** can be briefly enumerated: Plato in his dialogues *Parmenides* and *The Sophist*; Plotinus in *Enneade*; Damascius in *Difficulties and Solutions of First Principles*; Dionysus the Areopagite; The Holy Cappadocian Fathers; St. Maximus the Confessor; St. Symeon the New Theologian; Meister Eckhart; John Scotus Eriugena; Nicholas of Cusa; Jakob Boehme; G.W.F. Hegel; F.W.J. Schelling. Other discussions and attempts can be found in Martin Heidegger (Heidegger, 1969 [1957]) or Nikolai Berdiaev (Berdiaev, 1999 [1946]).

The hereby simple result is that **Indeterminate Immediacy** is simultaneous absolute identity of the absolute non-particulateness of the absolutely immediate arrest in the pure vibrationless and extensionless result; and absolute self-differentiation in absolute extensionless self-precedence. This is the absolute non-point, the immutable and ineffable non-fissure through which and in which identity is irreducibly given in the factual impossibility of effective non-reduction—because here reduction is already accomplished exhaustion. Hereby factual identity is self-differentiated through and within the very absolute antecedence of the immediate exhaustion of "self"-precedence. And hereby factual identity is its own absolute remnantless self-division.

The entire concept of **Indeterminate Immediacy** analytically engages the ultimate and over-terminal overlap between affirmative and negative, identity and difference, etc. Therefore, in this over-terminal and over-reductive overlap, the negative, both through its factual exhaustion and its factual identity ground and last but not least, through its immediate unfolded oneness with its absolute *initium*—(no longer) has any privative, rejective property or of bare ontological exteriorization. It preserves its standing as ground of all distinctions. But distinctions do not hereby operate privatively, but effectively, namely as fulcra of actualizing.[71] As in the old mythologies or

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[71] Here, we would like to explain that the antinomy grounded by the concept of the **Indeterminate Immediacy** for the determined intellect is no longer specific for any of the three types of antinomies identified by L. Blaga in the *Dogmatic Aeon* (Blaga, 2013): dogmatic antinomies, dialectic antinomies and a-categorical antinomies. Or, more precisely, the transcendence of the absolute seal of the **Indeterminate Immediacy** reveals itself as absolute coincidence of all three types of antinomies. It is a dogmatic antinomy, because it is founded on the transfiguration of the Nothingness concept; it is an antinomy of speculative dialectic, because it is attained through the coincidence of opposite terms in a term that reprises them analytically and synthetically in a system of reflected exhaustion—we hereby use *speculative dialectic* in its Hegelian description founded by *Aufhebung*, not in the sense used by Blaga—; and it is an a-categorical antinomy, because it constitutes itself as a transcendence of opposite terms which are given as moments of this transcendence, as this a-categoriality is

traditions in which a character's experience of death implies a palingenetic value, the **Indeterminate Immediacy** grounds the non-privative Negative of the Absolute that is the nucleus of the Hegelian speculation; the distinctions are all mere *representational* anticipations of the absolute palingenesis established on Golgotha, which is the essential original achievement of the revelation of the transcendent Caesura (that we could somewhat see as a non-privative negative or non-negative distinction) in onticity.—At the point where *representation-thought* established the sterile negative of privation or circumscription, thus the limited negative, speculative thought formulates the concept of the unlimited or non-privative negative through which, once exhausted, the opposite elements postulated as irretrievably excluding each other converge in a real oneness. This concept of the non-privative negative or nothingness comes to Hegel from Christian theology (Ahlers, 1975, p. 273) that, without exhaustively expounding it, implies it as mystery of dogmatic formulations.[72] (Pannenberg, 2004 [1991] I, pp. 292-293, 376; Pannenberg, 2004 [1991] II, pp. 19, 28) And this too is, evidently, in a direct correspondence with the concept of suppressing of the negative through the speculative *Aufhebung* in Hegel—as exhibited in the **Preface** and chapter **Force and Intellect** in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, as well as in *The Science of Logic* (Hegel, 2018 [1807], pp. 3-46, 79-101; Hegel, 2010 [1832], pp. 81-82; Hegel, 1895, III, pp. 13-27).—The speculative is precisely the exhaustive turning point of the difference or of the negative, even at the level of an element contained in the phenomenological analysis through which exteriority or heterogeneity, the contingency of the elementary multiple is reflexively

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described by Nicholas of Cusa.—*See also* A. Bereschi's study quoted above (Cusanus, 2008b, pp. 579-581).

[72] See the patristic works mentioned above. Each one of the Holy Fathers spoke about the birth of the Son from the Father, showing that it is ineffably and radically transcendent from any worldly or thought phenomenon. Therefore, essentially, it is fundamentally **non-privative** (Pseudo-Dionysius Areopagite, 1999, pp. 119-124; Cyrille d'Alexandrie, 1976, pp. 151-159; St. Basil of Caesarea, 2011, pp. 114-140).

reversed and, thus exhaustively, onto itself; and this reflexive turn simultaneously and apodictically mirrors the absolute overlap between the identity and the difference of states or properties of opposite elements, which unveils the absolute speculative oneness (hereby simultaneously given with the reality of difference) of elements originally believed to be disjunctive, irreconcilable, and for whose unity or interaction one would either formerly call upon a perpetually disjunctive multiplicity of elements in a relationship of ontological "ordering", either proclaim the most brutal reductionism to one of the spheres or states. Once this level was reached, as Hegel tells us, *representation* itself as a mode of thinking is completely removed from the speculative punctures of the contemplative articulations through its transformation, through its conceptual *metanoia*; and it's not natural, empirical, split thought that applies anymore instead of it or as its ground, but that which replaces it is the speculative experiential thought of the concept founded on exhaustion and unification with and through difference (Hegel, 2010 [1832], pp. 529-549, 670-675). *Representation* should not be completely excluded as a tool; inasmuch as its foundation and dynamic coordinates have changed through the speculative endeavor, it is still legitimate and can be used inasmuch as the risks of its confusions are all disabled. This is already established in Hegel's reinvestment in representational thought in his 1827 *Lectures* on the philosophy of religion where it becomes the "perduring vehicle of truth" (Schlitt, 2012 [1984], p. 124):

§573. (...) Aber die Religion ist die Wahrheit für alle Menschen, der Glaube beruht auf dem Zeugnis des Geistes, der als zeugend der Geist im Menschen ist. (Hegel, 1970 [1830] W10, p. 379)

[But religion is the truth *for all men*: faith rests on the *witness of the spirit*, which as witnessing is the spirit in man.] (Hegel, 2006, pp. 267-268)

In this, we might finally understand that, as we already said above, representation, once transfigured by speculative concept, may come to its

terms with the Real of its object and coalesce itself as archetypical knowledge and thinking. (Hegel, 1895, III, pp. 6, 27-29) This veritable *metanoia* of thought is made possible only by the Incarnation of Christ which is the pivotal point of the conversion of representational thought into legitimate metaphysical noetic apprehension:

> In contrast to this, that individuality in which I will the Divine Idea, is purely universal, it is for this reason directly removed from the sphere of the senses, it passes away of itself, becomes part of a history that is past, this sensuous mode must disappear and mount into the region of idea or mental representation. One of the constituent parts of the formation of the Church is that this sensuous form passes over into a spiritual element. The mode in which this purification from immediate Being takes place implies that the sensuous element in it is preserved ; the fact that it passes away is negation, as this is posited in and appears in one particular sensuous individual as such. It is only in a single individual that this sensuous representation is found it is not something which can be inherited, and is not capable of renewal as the manifestation of substance in the Lama is, it cannot appear in such a way because the sensuous manifestation as a definite individual manifestation is in its nature momentary ; it has to be spiritualised, and is therefore essentially a manifestation that has already been, and so is raised to the region of idea or mental representation.
>
> (...)
>
> What these forms are we have already seen, namely, the manifestation of God, that representation for the sensuous, spiritual consciousness which has arrived at universality, at thought, that complete development which exists for Spirit.
>
> (...)
>
> It has been sufficiently proved that this act of elevation to God, whether seen in feeling or in faith, or however you choose

to define the mode of its spiritual existence, takes place in the inmost part of Spirit, in the region of thought. Religion as representing what concerns the innermost part of Man's nature has its centre and the root of its movement in thought. God in His Essence is thought, the act of thought itself, just as the ordinary representation of Him and the shape given to Him in the mind, as well as the form and mode in which religion appears, are defined as feeling, intuition, faith, and so on. Knowledge, however, does nothing beyond bringing this inward element into consciousness on its own account, beyond forming a conception of that pulsation of thought in terms of thought. In this, knowledge may appear one-sided, and it may appear all the more as if feeling, intuition, and faith essentially belonged to religion, and were more closely connected with God than His thinking notion and His notion as expressed in thought ; but this inner element is present here, and thought just consists in getting a knowledge of it, and rational knowledge in general just means that we know a thing in its essential determinateness. (Hegel, 1895, III, pp. 102-103, 146, 295)

As James Yerkes remarks (Yerkes, 1983, pp. 184-186), the distinction that Hegel methodologically makes between "fundamental" and "dogmatic" theology is responsible for his utterance that dogmatic theology is yet "picture-thinking" (Hyppolite, 1946 II, p. 33) that is still occupied with the cognitive exposition of the doctrine of God, whilst "fundamental" and "philosophical" theology would manifest the more appropriate task of expressing the truth of the dogmatically theological exposition in a conceptual manner. In fact, as we have hereby seen, the task of making an accord between the "dogmatic" and the "philosophical" theology is only a matter of metaphysical proper speculative and antinomian apprehension. Correctly understood, the Hegelian enterprise does not put great difficulties for such accord, even if there is something still inconclusive in a few of the concepts that he chooses to employ especially concerning the issue of the dogmatic

Trinitarian interpretation. But here might be the place to consider that, in the §564-571 of the *Encyclopedia…* Hegel himself has made the mistake of reducing the dogmatic theology to a representation and of treating Trinitarian dogmatics from the standpoint of metaphysical syllogisms, whilst this was clearly not the path of correctly situating this level of metaphysical and mystical contemplation. (Hegel, 2006, pp. 264-266; Brito, 1983, pp. 499-503) But this perspective put aside, Hegel's considerations against "picture-thinking" are holding their ground.

In the instances where *representation* has not yet been speculatively or contemplatively overcome, by definition the philosophic endeavor will be marked by the conceptual insolvency of *immediate representations*. Thereby, discursive terms will always be caught in the mutual reduction or expansion of a dialectic devoid of destiny and, thus, without sense and rest. The aberrations of *immediate representation-thought* will restlessly and worthlessly be carried through all kinds of ontological scenarios unable to overcome the stage of a hypothesis, thus of a phantasm. This is why a genuine metaphysical endeavor is immediately called upon here every time to identify the uncritically supposed hypothesis, namely to deconstructively uncover the assumptions underlying the flawed foundation of the theoretical edifice. However, in the absence of an irreducible landmark, as well as of the coordinates through which it is actualized in determination, all philosophy will be reduced to the continuous passing of the noetic specter from one determination to another through the continuous criticism of the hypotheses that, pretentiously and academically, always claims to be culminating in a "(new) paradigm change" or, even worse, in the irrepressible hypothesis of a kind of "permanent revolution". The sterility of such damnation can only be equaled by the empty importance that thought bestows upon itself in its repeated unredemptive and correctional self-mortification.

C. Hegel's identity

V. Speculative identity
as Being in Absolute self-Mediation

Immediacy and (Un)Beginning

As Hegel remarks (Hegel, 2010 [1832], p. 45) there is a great logical and ontological difficulty in conceiving and making an absolute Beginning of everything, such as a rigorous science requires. The Beginning is either immediate, either mediated and, Hegel says, it is very easy to show that it can be neither because the two variants are simultaneously incompatible and self-contradictory:

If one is to begin with pure immediacy, then this immediacy rejects by its very definition and nature any possibility of an other, of an alterity or difference. Moreover, if we are to introduce difference within it, we couldn't find any source of it since there is nothing else but this pure and absolute immediacy, taking into account that we are speaking about the absolute and pure Beginning of everything and, thus, it is already given in this concept that we are forbidden to make any other supposition of any other element or existence prior or collateral to pure unbegun immediacy. But even we supposed peremptorily that this difference would be assured or given to us somehow, we could not have any operational ground to apply it in order to affect the pure and absolute unbegun immediacy. Because purely, absolutely unbegun immediacy has no difference, it also means that it has no parts or detectable features or even areas, at all. There is no given manifestation or surface or detectable beginning (detection supposes differentiation, thus already given beginning) where we could or should apply our given or supposed difference in order to differentiate or to begin something within the unbeginning. In fact, we can easily perceive that unbeginning is unperceivable

or undetectable because it is purely and absolutely confined and sealed within its absolute immediately shutting which is foreclosed absolutely prior to everything, thus even prior to itself; prior to itself since there is no self, thus, there is nothing to shut down, not even the shutting in itself, but that is precisely why the immediate and absolute shutting is already given as exhaustively realized before its own proper and abrupt realization. It is an abruptness that is abruptly suppressed and foreclosed as its own sudden foreclosure towards its own givenness. Or, as shown above, it is **Indeterminate Immediacy**.

On the other hand, the Beginning cannot be understood as mediated either. Mediation already supposes differentiation, thus it is absolute and pure beginning already abruptly given. However, mediation is precisely what gives the Beginning in itself. Which means that it is the very mediation that needs to be open in the sealing of the absolute Unbeginning, so that mediation is absolutely essential for the constitution of the account concerning the Beginning in itself. But it is precisely the passing from absolute immediacy to mediation that needs to be accounted for at this point of the narrative upon the Origin, and mediation cannot be taken as given because its proper resulting has not been grounded in immediacy which is exclusively its opposite, but only postulated as a pure dogmatic result.

Having acquired the evidence of this inescapable onto-logical impossibility of imposing mediation as something external to the originary pure immediacy, Hegel chooses to advance on the premises of pure immediacy as such:

> The true expression of this simple immediacy is therefore *pure being*. Just as *pure* knowledge should mean nothing but knowledge as such, so also pure being should mean nothing but *being* in general; *being*, and nothing else, without further determination and filling. (...)
>
> The beginning must then be *absolute* or, what means the same here, must be an abstract beginning; and so there is *nothing*

that it may *presuppose*, must not be mediated by anything or have a ground, ought to be rather itself the ground of the entire science. It must therefore be simply *an* immediacy, or rather only *immediacy* itself. Just as it cannot have any determination with respect to an other, so too it cannot have any within; it cannot have any content, for any content would entail distinction and the reference of distinct moments to each other, and hence a mediation. The beginning is therefore *pure being*. (Hegel, 2010 [1832], pp. 47-48)

A few paragraphs further, Hegel makes the point that every beginning is always abstract and devoid of content, such that only the following development of that initial abstractedness can account for true knowledge (Hegel, 2010 [1832], p. 49). This is the conclusion that he entails to the argument that he develops within the same pages through which he shows that (Biard, et al., 1981, pp. 39-41):

1. We cannot account for the initial immediacy as being the ground of what follows since the ground is already taken as mediated because grounding supposes the activity of justifying reason—thus, it supposes mediation. But the ground, in this metaphysical ontology, can only be considered as a result. Therefore, the ground cannot be considered as the same with what is prior, as true and absolute Beginning. It would be implicit that Being is not the ground, at least not in the sense of a justifying reason.

2. Therefore, the pure Beginning cannot speak of pure Being as of the ground upon which everything else rests, although there is no other instance from which the development and any result could be set out.

3. But in this, the ground, as mediated and developed result, coincides with the undeveloped and unjustified immediacy of Being because the entire reason with all its justifications is a development and a mediated result of the initial and void point of ontological priority

that is Being. In this respect, the entire movement of knowledge and of existence is revealed as returning to its own ground as result; and this is the turning point for the methodology of any subject that endeavors in the analysis of metaphysical fundamental principles: one cannot suppose instances or elements that are foreign or pre-requisite to the analysis, the analysis is driven by its own immediacy and every element that is engaged in it has to result from this immediacy only.

Resuming the issue of the relation between mediated and developed result and the undeveloped and unjustified immediacy, it all sets out from the well-known relation where what is prime and abstract is precisely undeveloped ground too because it consists in the initial void or instance which comes to be determined itself further through its own fundamental mediated differentiation and development:

> Conversely, it follows that it is just as necessary to consider as *result* that into which the movement returns as to its *ground*. In this respect, the first is just as much the ground, and the last a derivative; since the movement makes its start from the first and by correct inferences arrives at the last as the ground, this last is result. Further, the *advance* from that which constitutes the beginning is to be considered only as one more determination of the same advance, so that this beginning remains as the underlying ground of all that follows without vanishing from it. The advance does not consist in the derivation of an *other*, or in the transition to a truly other: inasmuch as there is a transition, it is equally sublated again. Thus the beginning of philosophy is the ever present and self-preserving foundation of all subsequent developments, remaining everywhere immanent in its further determinations. (Hegel, 2010 [1832], p. 49)

With this, the Hegelian premise of identifying Being at the same time with that which is pure, void, immediate and abstract Beginning and with

that which is developed, full, mediated and concrete result, is already put to work and logically founded. Moreover, the beginning of knowledge through the considerations concerning pure Being is fundamentally legitimized, and therefore beginning with pure Being is not something contingent anymore. With this, Hegel says, it is evident already that what is pure and abstract lack of content because it is absolute immediacy, is already absolutely mediated result. That which is given as the absolutely prior is always present as sublated (*Aufhebung*) within the content of what is developed; and that which is found as the true reason of the entire development of being and thinking as its culminated end in itself, is already the ground that makes possible the entire movement of development. (Hyppolite, 1973, p. 179) With this, the absolutely pure immediacy is seen as being exhaustively given as self-mediated in itself through its coincidence with its own terminative suddenness:

> So we have just given, right within science itself, the *reason* why in pure science the beginning is made with pure being. This pure being is the unity into which pure knowledge returns, or if this knowledge, as form, is itself still to be kept distinct from its unity, then pure being is also its content. It is in this respect that this *pure being*, this absolute immediate, is just as absolutely mediated. (Hegel, 2010 [1832], p. 50)

At this moment it would appear that Hegelian metaphysics would return simply at the methodology and concepts of the old metaphysical ontology. This would be a mistake, a mistake that becomes ever more apparent when we understand that there is still a tacit tension remaining between the two concepts that have been linked above, that of the pure and absolute Beginning and that of pure and absolute Being. Further Hegelian analysis of the tension reveals that they might not suppose each other exclusively, though they are indispensable to one another.

Beginning without Being? Or the Unity of Being and Nothing in Beginning

Arrived at this point, it becomes clear that the determination of Being can also be put aside when speaking about the absolute and pure Beginning of everything. This can also be seen as an epistemological and gnoseological necessity since any collapse of knowledge into pure Being would result in the abstract and, thus, negative result of not being able to determine itself further (Hegel, 2010 [1832], p. 50).

However, there also must be put to work the supposition of pure Beginning without supposing Being either:

> But, it may be said, the determination *of being* assumed so far as the beginning can also be let go, so that the only requirement would be that a pure beginning should be made. Nothing would then be at hand except the *beginning* itself, and we must see what this would be.—This position could be suggested also for the benefit of those who are either not comfortable, for whatever reason, with beginning with being and even less with the transition into nothing that follows from being, or who simply do not know how else to make a beginning in a science except by *presupposing* a *representation* which is subsequently *analyzed*, the result of the analysis then yielding the first determinate concept in the science. If we also want to test this strategy, we must relinquish every particular object that we may intend, since the beginning, as the beginning of *thought*, is meant to be entirely abstract, entirely general, all form with no content; we must have nothing, therefore, except the representation of a mere beginning as such. (Hegel, 2010 [1832], p. 51)

The speculative reason of this turn is that it could be assumed that even pure and absolute Being is an unwarranted supposition peremptorily given in spite of the scientific request that nothing should be put or supposed

prior to the Beginning. Being, as pure presence, even if absolutely abstract or undetermined or as pure immediacy, could still be seen as **something**, and thus as an immediacy that is yet mediated by relation either to itself, either to the absolute void or nothingness. But the pure and absolute Beginning cannot suppose any kind of something, be it even under the form of any relation, the relation towards itself included.

Even here Hegel avoids putting the issue in the terms of a pure and absolute Beginning departing from absolute Nothingness:

> As yet there is nothing, and something is supposed to become.
> The beginning is not pure nothing but a nothing, rather, from
> which something is to proceed… (Hegel, 2010 [1832], p. 51)

The reason is that the Hegelian methodology is speculative and specularity of reason is defined in the first place by always taking into consideration all and every element of a given situation or state of fact: thus, in every logical or ontological situation, reason always supposes both identity and difference since they always suppose each other by their inner correlative definition— and this is going to be the Hegelian position at every step of his system:

> Here we may quote from it only this, that there is nothing
> in heaven or nature or spirit or anywhere else that does not
> contain just as much immediacy as mediation, so that both
> these determinations prove to be unseparated and inseparable
> and the opposition between them nothing real.
>
> (…)
>
> It would not be difficult to demonstrate the unity of being
> and nothing in every example, in every actual thing or thought.
> The same must be said of being and nothing as was said above
> of immediacy and mediation (which contain a reference to
> each other and hence negation), that nowhere on heaven or on
> earth is there anything which does not contain both being and
> nothing in itself. (Hegel, 2010 [1832], pp. 46, 61)

That is why Hegel insists, a few chapters further, that the main and fundamental tenet in thinking the abstractedness of pure Beginning and of everything that results from it is to be considered as both Being and Nothing in their **unsayable** (*unsagbar*) difference to each other (Hegel, 2010 [1832], p. 68; Rohs, 1972, p. 40) that opens in their mutual result as Becoming (*Werden*) and that the gravest mistake in metaphysics is to enclose thinking in a one dimensional or one determinateness aspect of relating to the real— limiting the entire horizon either to Being only, either to Nothing only; reason that causes Hegel to insist on the absolute lack of any difference between pure Being and pure Nothing. But this limitation to one-sidedness is doomed to foreclose definitively the entire multiplicity or richness of being and of existence.

In our case, it would mean that mere Nothing, taken bare as exclusive instance of what should beget Beginning, is incapable to account for this burden because of its own void of content, and being barren, it can only forestall its own instantiation not even being able to engage towards any activity and least of all activity that would yield an other—a situation that repeats the foreclosure of pure Being without Nothing, that itself cannot generate anything either:

> Ex nihilo, nihil fit—is one of the propositions to which great significance was attributed in metaphysics. The proposition is either to be viewed as just a barren tautology, nothing is nothing, or, if becoming is supposed to have real meaning in it, then, since only nothing comes from nothing, there is in fact none in it, for the nothing remains nothing in it. Becoming entails that nothing not remain nothing, but that it pass over into its other, being. (…) … no matter how synthetically or merely imaginatively it took this proposition, there is yet even in the most incomplete unification of being and nothing a point at which they meet, and their distinguishedness vanishes.—The proposition, nothing comes from nothing, nothing is just nothing, owes its particular

importance to its opposition to becoming in general and hence also to the creation of the world out of nothing. Those who zealously hold firm to the proposition, nothing is just nothing, are unaware that in so doing they are subscribing to the abstract pantheism of the Eleatics and essentially also to that of Spinoza. The philosophical view that accepts as principle that being is only being, nothing only nothing, deserves the name of "system of identity"; this abstract identity is the essence of pantheism.

(…)

Nothing can begin, either in so far as something is, or in so far as it is not; for in so far as it is, it does not begin to be; and in so far as it is not, it also does not begin to be.—If the world, or anything, had begun, it would have begun in nothing; but in nothing there is no beginning—or nothing is not a beginning; for a beginning implies a being, but nothing contains no being. Nothing is only nothing. In a ground, a cause, and so on, if this is how nothing is determined, there is contained an affirmation, being.—For the same reason, too, something cannot cease to be. For then it would have to contain nothing, but being is only being, not the opposite of itself. (Hegel, 2010 [1832], pp. 61, 79)

But if this is the fundamental supposition of the Hegelian speculative reason, that there is an absolutely prior identity between identity and difference or, ontologically, between Being and Nothing, then two problems arise:

1. The question of absolute originary ontological difference—how and where is this ontological difference given in the priority of the unbeginning, where is it supposed to spring from? This can be explained as follows:

The question of the ontological absolute priority of the unbegun originary—since Being and Nothing, identity and difference are postulated as coincident in their fundamental instantiation as absolutely passing one into the other, their unity has to be the effect of their originary unbegun indiscernibility. What and how is this common Origin of Being and Nothing?

Moreover, if this Origin is followed by the instantiation of Being and Nothing as distinctively given in order for them to have had already passed one into the other, thus they are simultaneously indistinct but different from each other, then this Origin is also the absolutely undetermined spring of their difference (Biard, et al., 1981, p. 57). Is this just another repetition of the duality of Being and Nothing, are Being and Nothing in their simultaneous indistinction their own proper Origin as immediacy in itself, or is the Origin a supreme immediate transcendence beyond the separateness of Being and Nothing? Then, of course, this issue also can be developed as a separate discussion concerning another aspect: if there is coincidence between Being and Nothing in the Origin, is this Origin beyond the activity of Becoming? Does it have or does it not have any rest as Schelling accused Hegel since God as the First, the Origin, is „the eternal Process"? (Hegel, 1895, III, p. 13; Schelling, 1994 [1827], p. 160; Bowie, 1993, pp. 175-176; Wirth, 2003, p. 17) The problem is double:

– First, Hegel pretends that there is no real difference between Being and Nothing, their originary coincidence being the ground of the speculative depart of metaphysics. But this lack of difference already engages the issue of the undivided Origin on one hand, because their lack of difference is precisely this originary coincidence manifest in their concept (Schlitt, 2012 [1984], p. 33). On the other, this lack of difference is itself also, as a second aspect, a result of the originary difference that keeps them separate in order for them to pass one in the other. Their unsayable difference which is their prior undivided Origin is what unites them without distinction and a unity that manifests as their perpetual passing one in the other, which cannot happen without their prior real distinction.

– Second, the distinction that makes possible the separation of Being and Nothing in order to unite them simultaneously in order to open up in the order of Becoming that springs determinate being, is not defined in Hegel. Or rather, in the **2nd Remark**, this distinction is named

by Hegel himself as "*unsagbar*", that is "unsayable" (Hegel, 2010 [1832], p. 68; Rohs, 1972, p. 40); or, **ineffable**, to translate it differently. Thus, the very essence of the absolute ontological manifestation passes as impossible to be named, thus, impossible to be assigned, apprehended, defined—which determined some authors to consider that this is a form of the Hegelian "dialectical confusion" (*dialektische Verwirrung*) in his speculative aperture of the Beginning. (Rohs, 1972, p. 40) What is even more revealing is that the *unsagbar Unterschiede von Sein und Nichts*, the unsayable Difference between Being and Nothing, converts, in the **4ᵗʰ Remark** into the beginning of the dialectic as *Unbegreiflichkeit des Anfangs*, (Rohs, 1972, p. 40) the *incomprehensibility* of the Beginning or its "inconceivability" as Ahlers (Ahlers, 1975, p. 267) choses to translate it:

> Once we presuppose that being and nothing are absolutely divorced, beginning or becoming, as we often hear said, is of course *incomprehensible*, for we make a presupposition which does away with beginning or becoming and yet *again* admits it. And this contradiction, which we create ourselves and make impossible to resolve, this is what is called the *incomprehensible*. (Hegel, 2010 [1832], p. 79)[73]

If Being and Nothing are distinct, Hegel says, then there is no possibility for the absolute beginning to occur or this occurrence is dismissed as incomprehensible. But Hegel somehow fails to recognize that he has already given that distinction even merely by naming them differently and, as such,

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[73] In the German original:

Bei der Voraussetzung der absoluten Geschiedenheit des Seins vom Nichts ist – was man so oft hört – der Anfang oder das Werden allerdings etwas *Unbegreifliches*; denn man macht eine Voraussetzung, welche den Anfang oder das Werden aufhebt, das man doch *wieder* zugibt, und dieser Widerspruch, den man selbst setzt und dessen Auflösung [man] unmöglich macht, heißt das *Unbegreifliche*. (Hegel, 1969 [1832] W5, I, p. 110)

they are already manifest in a development of the form (Rohs, 1972, p. 43) that is subsequent to the true and authentic absolute immediacy that lies beyond Being and Nothing and their passing into one another, making them as immediately distinct into their mutually moving empty immediacies.

It is like Hegel himself has dismissed as incomprehensible the eminent unity that self-divides itself in order to privilege the very same eminent unity, but not in itself, but only in the passing of Being into Nothing and of Nothing into Being. Then, he himself confesses against himself by saying that without the unity (admitted only in the reciprocal passing of Being and Nothing) the beginning would be incomprehensible.

The reason for this dismissal of the transcendent immediacy of Being and Nothing seems to be an incomplete reflection on the prerequisite implications of the absolute relation of pure Being and of pure Nothing and probably the lack of a practical relation to canonical experience of the religious mysticism that could be found only in traditional Catholic or Orthodox Christianity. However, it is worth mentioning that in the Glockner edition as cited by Rohs, the difference and the determination of Being and Nothing are to be found in their "bottomlessness", *Bodenlosigkeit*:

> Beim Sein und Nichts dagegen ist der Unterschied in seiner Bodenlosigkeit, und eben darum ist es keiner, denn beide Bestimmungen sind dieselbe Bodenlosigkeit. (Rohs, 1972, pp. 40-41)[74]

Thus, we can see that Hegel himself plays, maybe unconsciously, with the double instantiation of the Origin: on one hand, as pure Difference or Difference as Difference (*Unterschied an Sich*), it is not manifest, but ineffable transcendence of what lies beyond the manifest and the activity of the manifestation given as Being and Nothing, and it is the ground of their

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[74] Rohs' quote indicates page 209 of the 1952 reprinted 8th volume of the Glockner *Jubiläumsausgabe* from 1927.

difference that maintains their distinction as basis of their reciprocal coincidence that amounts to absolute identity as Becoming; on the other, the Origin is itself manifest as One, but a One that is already divided within itself as Being and Nothing, but this division also reveals their absolute lack of distinction, their absolute unity, but as Becoming, thus, as absolute activity (Hegel, 1895, III, pp. 12-27; Schlitt, 2012 [1984], pp. 34-35).

2. The question of the reformation or reformulation of the principle of identity—once that the fundamental supposition of metaphysical ontology is the intimate and originary coincidence between identity and difference, this has infinite and decisive consequences both in ontology and logic.

It is the place to observe that the first issue epitomizes the essence of the Hegelian philosophy and it tacitly supposes a speculative reformation of the identity principle as ineffable and immediate absolute differentiation in itself of the absolute immediacy as immediate passing of itself in its own reflection. (Ahlers, 1975, p. 266) Or, as we tried above to express it: **Absolute Indeterminate Immediacy**.

In this unbegun ungrounded absolute immediacy we can see the veritable origin of the Hegelian enterprise: not only his principle of identity, but the foundational moment of the speculative thought. (Ahlers, 1975, p. 267) In every instance that speculative thought has occurred we can see the continuous and totalizing moment of the contradiction that turns upon and against itself and reveals the middle ground of the opposites as a third that unites and separates them in the very moment of their occurrence, being simultaneously transcendent and immanent to the entire movement, origin of the movement and instance of contradictory coincidence of its own difference to itself and as absolute ineffable, *unsagbar*, identity and unity of itself to itself in this absolute separation. This is precisely what we identified in the above chapters as **Absolute Indeterminate Immediacy**, or the absolute that divides uniting itself immediately or unites itself dividing itself immediately.

Such a fundamental turn of thought upon itself, if considered properly, must impose ontological and ontic consequences, beginning with the first order of the discourse of the speculative narrative. That is why Hegel opened the *Phenomenology*... with considerations regarding what the speculative discourse ought to be and made clear distinctions between the rational discourse and the speculatively rational discourse. And that is why Hegel quickly understood that his enterprise has ramifications that touch upon human subject's ontological position in the world and the paths that the subject choses to interpret his meaning of existence and of history and that this endeavor needs an exposition that he undertook in the *Phenomenology of the Spirit*.

Of course, the speculative turn of thought had to chiefly modify thinking itself and the first systematical expression of this inner horizon which is the *Science of Logic*. And in this task he chose to begin not with the inner expression of knowledge, but with the Real that touches and envelops any subject that appears in the world: the primarily dimension of Being; which immediately revealed itself as Nothing and then Becoming and opened then all the ramifications of **Determinateness**, **Magnitude** and **Measure** from which *Essence* was to immediately and mediately become in order to reveal **Reflection**, **Appearance** and **Actuality**. Of the latter three, **Appearance** is the middle term between the inner realized *Essence* and the outer expressed *Essence* as **absolute necessity** which reveals itself as **absolute relation**. As such, the Hegelian *Logic* finds *Essence* as expressed in three steps:

a. The inner part where *Essence* finds itself in its fundamental relation of differentiation and coincidence with Being. This is where *Essence* reveals itself first as **Shine**, but **Shine** is in itself the first occurrence of *Essence*, thus no less than *Essence* itself in its first moment sublated from Being through the speculative turn, or the immediate face of the Mediacy that is *Essence*. But in the second moment, *Essence* takes hold of itself and comes to terms with itself, with its determinities:

Essence shows its own attributes or determinations which are the **Determinations of reflection**, the ways which reveal the inwardness of *Essence* as positions of *Essence* with, against and towards itself: **identity**, **difference** and **contradiction** of itself. And once that these fundamental positions are developed, *Essence* can pass to its next moment which is that of the **Ground** that can open itself up as the point of departure of the concreteness of real existence which appears in the concrete presence of things.

b. The outer part, **Appearance**, where *Essence* finds itself embodied in the concrete **Existence**, **Appearance** and **Essential relation**.

c. The in-and-outer part where *Essence* finds itself speculatively identified with itself as relation between the inner and the outer, the substantiality, the accidentality and the necessity etc.

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Thus, our analysis will further discuss: how the **Doctrine of Being** section gives openness to the reformation of identity in the Hegelian doctrine; what it means for Hegel to reform the identity principle; and the most crucial consequences of this reformation.

Being, Nothing, Becoming. Reforming the Identity Principle

There are two fundamental aspects of the relation between Being and Nothing (Biard, et al., 1981, pp. 47-51): their immediacy and their pure identity to one another through their very definition.

Pure Being (*reine Sein*) is thought beyond every determination. As Spinoza put it, every determination is limitation, thus, negation (Spinoza, 2002, p. 892). Thus, one would expect that Being would be treated by Hegel under the conceptual realm of the affirmative and of pure, undetermined presence. But because Being is also purely immediate (Hegel, 2010 [1832],

p. 58) or, since this is the unassuming moment of pure and absolute Beginning that cannot suppose anything prior to itself, Being is the absolute Immediacy in itself (Schlitt, 2012 [1984], pp. 30-31), Hegel understands its lack of determination as pure void:

> In its indeterminate immediacy it is equal only to itself and also not unequal with respect to another; it has no difference within it, nor any outwardly. If any determination or content were posited in it as distinct, or if it were posited by this determination or content as distinct from an other, it would thereby fail to hold fast to its purity. It is pure indeterminateness and emptiness.—There is *nothing* to be intuited in it... (...) Being, the indeterminate immediate is in fact *nothing*, and neither more nor less than nothing. (Hegel, 2010 [1832], p. 59)

Pure Nothing (*reine Nichts*) is also thought as simple, equal to itself, empty, absence of determination, content and of any distinction within. Conforming to the theological tradition, Nothing would have had to be thought as pure and absolute splitting in itself, inequality to itself, absolutely distinct from itself in pure emptiness. But such a Nothing would not be consistent with the position of pure and absolute unbegun (unassuming) Beginning. First, Beginning is difference, but it does not mean necessarily splitting and inequality. Second, it is not clear where would this splitting and inequality come from since it would be the absolute opposite to the lack of distinction that can be found in Being. Thus, the Hegelian postulate of Nothing is not the meontological occurrence of the derivate void (nor the infernal variant of it). Instead of being the οὐκ ὄν, the Hegelian immediate Nothing seems at first glance to be just a game of words where Hegel names the pure Origin of the Beginning with another name, but preserving the same description of it—although, Hegel does seem to return to the classic meaning of the Nothing a few pages later (Hegel, 2010 [1832], p. 60) where he speaks about "abstract, immediate negation" and "negation devoid of reference".

However, there appear two operations:

– First, Hegel accentuates the concreteness of Nothing in order to postulate its being:

> In so far as mention can be made here of intuiting and thinking, it makes a difference whether something or *nothing* is being intuited or thought. To intuit or to think nothing has therefore a meaning; the two are distinguished and so nothing *is* (concretely exists) in our intuiting or thinking... (Hegel, 2010 [1832], p. 59)

– Second, both Being and Nothing are given the ontological distinction from one another in the third paragraph of the opening of the speculative movement of Being and Nothing only in order to make them identical in their mutual passing one into the other as Becoming (*Werden*). Since they have been described as identical, it would mean that, in fact, we assist here to only one instance of the absolute Origin given in its two aspects through which it expresses itself as purely differing in itself and passing from itself into itself as pure and absolute movement or activity of absolute passing.—We could ask at this point if it really is any distinction between the **caesura** by which the absolute unbegun and non-manifest Origin manifests itself as pure Being, pure Nothing and their passing one into the other as Becoming, and "the abstract, immediate, devoid of reference negation" that Nothing is. Hegel gives no indication contrary to what he continually assumes as a pure, immediate, and absolute coincidence between the unbegun Origin, Being, Nothing and Becoming as their passing.

This absolute passing culminates, also, in the calm and absolute "vanishedness" of itself (*eine solche Vereinigung aber zerstört sich*), which could also be translated as "destruction of itself"; this result is not the immediate Nothing from the Beginning, but "quiescent simplicity" as being

that is passed into existence as expression of concrete and definitive passing into one another of Being and Nothing:

> This result is a vanishedness, but it is not *nothing*; as such, it would be only a relapse into one of the already sublated determinations and not the result of nothing *and of being*. It is the unity of being and nothing that has become quiescent simplicity. But this quiescent simplicity is *being*, yet no longer for itself but as determination of the whole. (Hegel, 2010 [1832], p. 81)

Thus, we could find in the Hegelian movement, seen in its whole, as the expression of absolute Immediacy, postulated as Origin or ground of Beginning, that gives itself as pure undetermined coincidence of passing in itself. The passing, in order to occur, needs the two instances of Being and Nothing that are described as identical, though they are required to be, at the same time, distinct from one another. The great issue here is that the origin of this distinction between them is not properly discussed by Hegel, but with the sole purpose of denying it, although he makes the very clear utterance of their real difference and separation:

> But the truth is just as much that they are not without distinction; it is rather that *they are not the same*, that they are absolutely distinct yet equally unseparated and inseparable, and that *each* immediately *vanishes in its opposite*. (Hegel, 2010 [1832], p. 60)

Their mutual difference seems to be lost as not ever having been manifest since their pure occurrence coincides immediately with their passing one into the other without ever having been given their distinction as something actual or effective. The immediate, sudden exhaustion of their simultaneous passing into one another already prior to their own passing (*nicht übergeht, sondern übergegangen ist*), seems to cover definitively any trace of their actual distinction:

> The truth is neither being nor nothing, but rather that being has passed over into nothing and nothing into being—"has passed over," not passes over. (Hegel, 2010 [1832], pp. 59-60)

This distinction is then openly and emphatically rejected by Hegel for the course of **2nd** (especially) and **3rd** (in passing) **Remarks** and following the speculative dialectics of Being and Nothing (Hegel, 2010 [1832], pp. 66-78). The scope of these **Remarks** is to make the necessary corrections and observations concerning the possible interpretations of his speculation concerning Being and Nothing.

In the **1st Remark** Hegel insists upon, first, the effectivity of the concept of Nothing which is to be held as expressing a real referent; second, upon the culmination of the unity of Being and Nothing in the immediate movement of Becoming and that this unity is to be found in the natural languages and traditional representations about the world and the life or in the traditional theology, especially Christian. Concerning theology, Hegel's considerations about the presence of alterity in God's works and attributes are notable since it again serves as an example that he does not understand Nothing as οὐκ ὄν. Just as significant are his somewhat ironic criticisms against the Kantian objection against the Ontological Argument where Hegel emphasizes the Kantian confusion, on one hand, between what is determinate and what is not (Girard, 1995, pp. 414-415); on the other hand, between the determinacies' position, where determinate being and determinate nothing appear to contradict and eliminate each other, and the pure and absolute abstractions of Being and Nothing where their coincidence is apodeictical—hereby giving a powerful counterargument against Kant's assertion that the *Prototypon transcendentale* is contradictory, hence, only an asymptotic ideal, since the Absolute, as Totality, would entail the contradictory super-position between all attributes or predicates and their negations, such superposition being ideally possible at most (Kant, 2000 [1781], pp. 553-559).

In the **2nd Remark** Hegel begins by emphasizing the difference between Being and Nothing. But at the same the immediate and simultaneous unity of the two is also given by their very distinction—thus, Hegel says:

> Now, in so far as the proposition "*being and nothing are the same*" expresses the identity of these determinations, yet in fact equally contains the two as distinguished, it internally contradicts itself and thus dissolves itself. And if we concentrate on this result, what we have before us is a proposition which, on closer inspection turns out to vanish spontaneously. It has movement. But in thus vanishing, it is its proper content which comes to be in it, namely *becoming*. (Hegel, 2010 [1832], pp. 66-67)

Hegel continues then the considerations about what the speculative proposition means: taking into consideration, simultaneously, the inadvertence of subject and object in any judgment of the intellect and the fact that, in speculative propositions, the non-identity of subject and object are an essential moment too. In order to correct this lacking, the opposite judgment is then expressed which affirms the opposition of Being and Nothing, but the defect in this case reveals to be the disconnection between the two propositions which are, in fact, not only connected, but expressing the same truth and, thus, united absolutely. This union, Hegel says, is "an *unrest* of simultaneous *incompatibles*, *a movement*" (p. 67). But the most important issue here is that the unity that is postulated between the two elements is derived from a comparison that, as an operation that pertains to the external reflection of a subject, supposes the neutral indifference between two instances of a "totally abstract sameness" established by comparison. Of course, since the two elements postulated as identical are contradictory one another, this identity sounds "harsh and discordant"; the solution cannot be using another word, though—"unseparatedness" or "inseparability" (p. 68), because then the affirmative aspect of the connection is lost and

the speculative method is dissolved. The conclusion is instructive and represents the edifice upon which Hegel rests his entire speculative edifice since it obviously is the attempt at the reformation of the identity principle as a result of the analysis of the pure and absolute Beginning and the consequences that can be derived from it:

> So the whole true result that we have here before us is *becoming*, but a becoming which is not the merely one-sided or abstract unity of being and nothing. It consists rather in this movement, that pure being is immediate and simple and for that very reason is just as much pure nothing; that the distinction between them *is*, but equally *sublates itself* and *is not*. This result does also assert, therefore, the distinction of being and nothing, but it asserts it as one which is merely *intended*. (Hegel, 2010 [1832], p. 68)

At this very point, in denying the one-sided attitude of formal thinking that tries to keep separate the two elements of the speculative identity, Being and Nothing, Hegel also engages, somehow against his proper intentions, in revealing the transcendent character of the difference between Being and Nothing and in this he is also revealing the actual source of their identity and manifestation as pure and absolute speculative Origin that has no presupposition in itself and that differentiates itself in itself prior to itself:

> The *ordinary assumption* is that being is the absolutely other of nothing, and that there is nothing as clear as this absolute distinction; indeed, nothing seems easier than being able to state it. But it is just as easy to convince oneself that this is impossible, that the distinction is *unsayable*. *Let those who insist on the distinction of being and nothing, let them just try to state in what the distinction consists*. If being and nothing had any determinateness differentiating them, then, as we said, they would be determinate being and determinate nothing, not the pure being

and the pure nothing which they still are at this point. Their distinction is therefore completely empty, each is as indeterminate as the other; the distinction depends, therefore, not on them but on a third element, on *intention*. (Hegel, 2010 [1832], p. 68)

The factual truth of the relation of Being and Nothing is, then, their **unsayable unity and differentiation** in the unbegun Origin which they explicit in their manifestation as simultaneous identity-difference that sublates itself into Becoming—there is no independent subsistence of Being or Nothing from one another, and a few lines further Hegel formulates explicitly their position each as pure "*transition* of the one into the other". Becoming is, then, the ultimate revelation of the absolute identity of the Origin, it is its final manifestation as absolute undetermined immediacy, after which only determined being follows. If we were to express this as a syllogism, the Origin is, then, that which keeps itself as non-manifest or unthought, or the subject that inhabits the major premise, while Becoming is its manifestation in the plenitude of the ontological instantiations, thus, the identity of subject and predicate in conclusion, while the identity-difference of Being and Nothing is expressing as minor premise the tacit identity-difference between Origin and Becoming as the middle term of the entire syllogism and as condition for the actualisation of the Origin as absolute Becoming. As Becoming is unfolded in the entire process of the speculative dialectic and intervenes at every level of its movement as puncture of the transfigurative *Aufhebung*, it wields within the absolute power of the pure identity with its immediate and absolute negative: the fundamental essence of the *Spirit*, the ***Absolute Indeterminate Immediacy***. With this moment our exposition has reached the point where the issue of the effectiveness of this revelation is to be briefly examined. What is the foremost effect of reaching the ***Absolute Indeterminate Immediacy***? Inevitably, what we need here to address is the effect that should manifest in the matter of identity itself.

Reforming Identity: absolute abstract effectiveness passing in Essence

Essence is sublated Being. As sublated Being, Essence is reflection, that is mediated abstractness of Being and Nothing in the Becoming. Becoming the Essence first entails the Shine (*der Schein*) which interiorize itself as the play between the appearance and the essence. Finally, this interiority apprehends itself as "*Reflexions-bestimmungen*", *determinations of reflection*. (Hegel, 1969 [1832] W6, II, pp. 18-36; Hegel, 2010 [1832], pp. 341-354) It is the place to remark that the unbegun immediacy of Being carries on to this point the effectiveness of its transfigurative power up to the moment of reflected identity.

Thus, there is the absolute ineffable instantiation of pure Immediacy that is the absolute Origin of Being's and Nothing's pure, absolute and immediate identity. Whereas Becoming is only the terminal revelation of this identity, but only through the immediate difference of Being and Nothing that is, itself, opened as immediate transition of Being in and as Nothing and of Nothing in and as Being.

These moments are theologically constituted (König, 1999, pp. 34-41; Schlitt, 2012 [1984], pp. 19-23, 51-52)[75]: the absolute and pure Immediacy should be understood the Trinitarian Interior of the Principle and it expresses the eternal Begetting of the Logos and the eternal Procession of the Spirit;[76]

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[75] For example, Schlitt comments at pp. 19-20:

> That each logical moment is in its own way the totality of the Concept and that each moment is for Hegel only conceivable in terms of the triadically structured dialectical method—these are the two characteristics which fundamentally justify the identification of Hegel's logic as a philosophically transposed and, in the form of pure thought, for Hegel adequately formulated trinitarian movement of divine self-constituting subjectivity.

[76] This position is openly and extensively criticized by Dale M. Schlitt in his study. He insists in this criticism against Hegelian speculative Trinitarian claims by committing multiple times the same fallacy of positing the impossibility of gaining any position

(Hegel, 1895, III, pp. 12, 22, 28-32, 35-37) whereas the moment of the Becoming concerns the terminal and concrete opening of the absolute towards the institution of determined being (*Dasein*). Hegel is very specific in rejecting that Being and Nothing have no truth in themselves, but only in Becoming:

> For this reason I also refrain from taking notice of the many self-styled objections and refutations that have been advanced against the claim that neither being nor nothing are something true but that becoming is their truth. The intellectual education required to perceive the nothingness of these refutations, or rather to dispel such arbitrary ideas on one's own, will be attained only through a critical cognition of the forms of the understanding. (Hegel, 2010 [1832], p. 70)

This Hegelian rejection of the subsistence of Being and Nothing is in itself part of the speculative movement since without the two initial instantiations, there would be no Becoming—which he recognizes implicitly:

> For the purpose of expressing the speculative truth, the defect is first remedied by adding the contrary proposition, namely "*being and nothing are not the same*," which we also stated above. But another defect then crops up, for these propositions are disconnected and therefore present their content only in an antinomy, whereas the content refers to one and the same thing, and the determinations expressed in the two propositions should be united absolutely—in a union which can then only be said to be an *unrest* of simultaneous *incompatibles*, a *movement*. The commonest injustice done to a speculative content

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of thought beyond determinateness or finitude. For Dale M. Schlitt every postulate of a transcendent instantiation is prisoner of immanence. The simple evidence that any determinateness is immediately constituted by the supposition of the horizon of indeterminateness, and that even the objection that indeterminateness can be perceived as in implicit relation to determinateness (thus, apparently, as something relative) also pre-supposes the same indeterminateness, does not seem to occur at all to the American author.

is to render it one-sidedly, that is, to give prominence only to one of the propositions in which it can be resolved. This proposition is then undeniably asserted; but *the statement is just as false as it is correct*, for once one proposition is taken out of its speculative context, the other also must be given at least as much attention and articulation.

[...]

So the whole true result that we have here before us is *becoming*, but a becoming which is not the merely one-sided or abstract unity of being and nothing. It consists rather in this movement, that pure being is immediate and simple and for that very reason is just as much pure nothing; that the distinction between them *is*, but equally *sublates itself* and *is not*. This result does also assert, therefore, the distinction of being and nothing, but it asserts it as one which is merely *intended*. (Hegel, 2010 [1832], pp. 67-68)

Hegel's philosophy compatibility with Trinitarian theology is manifest in Hegel's precise identification of Being and Nothing.—As he well puts it, if **Immediacy** in itself would not beget its own absolute identity of Being and Nothing, there would be two non-speculative contradictory consequences:

1. Either passing from the Unbegun and Undetermined **Immediacy** to something else would be impossible (at least at the explanatory level).

2. Either the passing would entail a contradictory and exterior, accidental, arbitrary and dual passing from Indeterminateness to determinateness. And that would still let completely unaccounted the reason that would make the Origin capable of opening itself to such immediate alterity.

But by making this speculative identification-self-differentiation between Being and Nothing, Hegel reveals the speculative reasoning that can account for the Trinitarian principle: identity-self-differentiation of the One within

Himself. In Trinitarian dogmatic formulations we encounter precisely this concept of the absolutely immediate Begetting of the Son from the Father and the absolute and immediate Procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father (St. Gregory of Nyssa, 1995 [1893], pp. 60-71; Hegel, 1895, III, pp. 12, 22, 28-32); thus, absolute and immediate differentiation of the same Substance in three hypostases who are each one immediately identical and immediately different from the others two, and they are each one entirely and immediately the same Substance, while each one being immediately different from each other in and through the very same originary Substance that they share without any particularity.

In fact, Hegelian speculative exploration of the issue of absolute beginning and immediacy has postulated, through the above shown speculative revelation of the absolute and immediate identity and difference between Being and Nothing, precisely the speculative mirroring of the super rationality of Trinitarian dogmatics' principle.

Following from these observations, it is expectable that the same ramification that we found concerning *Aufhebung* is to be found also in the matter concerning the contemplation and formulation of the principles of reason. The identity that is given within any determination of being and existence should reflect the same moments of transfiguration of its interiority as we could find in the dialectical speculation of Being, Nothing and Becoming. The identity of *Dasein* could be here remolded or, better said, reformed by the Hegelian endeavor. (Hyppolite, 1973, pp. 178-179)

Identity is reformed in Hegel not only by being postulated as a speculative coincidence of opposites, which amounts to a formal contradiction for the intellect, but especially by immediately self-dividing itself as pure and absolute immediacy and remaining immediately identical in this division with the unbegun origin. (Hegel, 2010 [1832], p. 357)

But the objection that would be raised against Hegel would be that, in conformity with his own position, identity must not be postulated as "abstract" and "void"—as such, it would demand content, while pure identity mustn't have any; then, in order to not suppose anything differentiated within identity, the content should be removed either under the concept of transmuting the content into its abbreviation (abstraction), either under the concept of eliminating, draining or depleting the content once given. Following Hegel's own reasoning, abstraction and void are **results** and look as the opposites of the elements from which they are obtained. And, as such, we should here have the abstract and void mediated identity on one side and the immediate effectivity of the content of pure identity on the other.

But the identity of *Dasein*, though is a result as having been posited through Essence, cannot suppose either an abstraction, either the void since it pertains to the effectivity of the Existence. While immediacy is effective and concrete, but immediately mediated as Essence, the result of its mediation is not the abstract and void identity, identity the speculative transmutation of which is the result of the interiorization of Reflection.

Moreover, the immediate and factual movement of the absolute Immediacy—as unbegun origin into the Beginning as reciprocal passing of Being into Nothing and viceversa as resulting into Becoming—implies a "rich" Immediacy, an exceedance of the absolutely prior given, of the purely self-divided unified indivision. The "richness" does not have to mean the presence of a content: it can be seen just as the ineffability of the exceeding priority upon itself of the pure and absolutely sudden Immediacy. Or, as Hegel mentions:

> ...the First is the βυθός, the Abyss, the depths, ἅιών, the Eternal, whose dwelling is in the inexpressible heights, who is raised above all contact with finite things, out of whom nothing is evolved, the First Principle, the Father of all existence, the Propator, who is a Father only mediately, the προαρχη, He who

was before the beginning. The revelation of this abyss of Being, of this hidden God, is defined as self-contemplation, reflection into self, concrete determination in general; self-contemplation begets, it is, in fact, the begetting of the Only-begotten… (Hegel, 1895, III, pp. 30-31)

From this point of view on, we can assess that what really is lacking in the Hegelian speculative logic development, are two fundamental elements:

1. the eminence of the Unity of Being, Nothing and Becoming as immediate Essence of the Origin and as inner nature of the manifestation of the sublime.

2. the need for a privative Nothing in order to entail the actualization of the determinate being, as Ontological Difference between absolute Being and determinate being.

The entire Hegelian exercise that follows is constructed upon a sudden continuity between the eminent instantiation of pure and absolute Being, Nothing and Becoming and the passing into Existence and determinate being; while the Hegelian narrative appears to assume precisely what Hegel explicitly pretended: a narrative about God Himself, before the creation of the world. (Hegel, 2010 [1832], p. 29)

Another issue is that if Hegel would have postulated the Origin as plentiful in its absolute Immediacy, he would have had to proceed in a preliminary explicit theological path where he would have taken into discussion:

1. the sublimity of the absolutely accomplished Being as the abundance of the unity of the absolute and immediate Multiple and of all its attributes.

2. the metaphysical ontological Essence that couldn't have been the same reflection of the immediate division of Being (in its unbegun Origin),

but it would have been the supreme perichoresis of the absolute instances of the exhaustive alterity. In this case the eminent Essence would have had to be established against the speculative Essence of the determinate being, this time as the irreducibility of the eminent Essence to the phenomenality and its laws, just as phenomenality preserved its independence towards the laws of the intellect. (Biard, et al., 1983, pp. 205-233)

3. the unity of Becoming would have supported the radical identity of the exceeding Immediacy with its absolute alterity as eschatological revelation of the world of the **Concept** and of the **Idea** as concrete experience of the subjective spirit in the life of the explicit manifestation of the Principle—thus mirroring the Concept section of the **Science of Logic** (Biard, et al., 1987, pp. 16-20 & sqq). But in this new occurrence, the life of the political and social community and of the State and its institutions would not have had been enough for such ultimative and soteriological experience.

However, we may have some suggestions in other parts of his work that he might have had a few hints also towards such possibilities—as in the fragment about "Love" (Hegel, 1971 [1797/1798], W1, pp. 244-250; Hegel, 1975 [1795], pp. 302-308) that can be seen resumed as in a distant echo in the *Science of Logic* fragments about the Concept where Hegel defines the universal as "free love" and "boundless blessedness" as it relates to "what is distinct from it as to itself" (Hegel, 2010 [1832], p. 532), but finds its explicit treatment in his *Lectures on the philosophy of religion* (Hegel, 1895, III, pp. 35-37). Even more, this relation to itself as free love of the coincidence of itself with itself in its own radical alterity is exposed in the *Science of Logic* fragments as coincidence between the inner substance's necessity and the mediated accidental in the immanent reflection of the absolute negativity of the concept:

The *universal* is posited, on the contrary, as the *essence* of its determination, as this determination's *own positive nature*. For the determination that constitutes the negative of the universal is in the concept simply and solely a *positedness*; essentially, in other words, it is at the same time the negative of the negative, and only is as this self-identity of the negative which is the universal. To this extent, the universal is also the *substance* of its determinations, but in such a way that what for the substance as such was an *accident*, is the concept's own self *mediation*, its own *immanent* reflection. But this mediation, which first raises the accidental to *necessity*, is the *manifested* reference; the concept is not the abyss of formless substance, or the necessity which is the *inner* identity of things or circumstances different from each other and reciprocally constricting; rather, as absolute negativity, it is the informing and creative principle, and since the determination is not as limitation but is just as much simply sublated as determination, is positedness, so is the reflective shine the appearance as appearance of *the identical*. (Hegel, 2010 [1832], pp. 531-532)

What Hegel's principle of identity lacked, then, is this concreteness and richness of the absolute **Indetermined Immediacy**. This fundamental privation opened too much his speculative position towards the uncertainty of the speculative aperture and its exhaustiveness which has made his system permeable to the infinite fractionation and unrest of the perpetual speculative turn. In short, instead of maintaining and using his speculative method as an instrument, in certain places of his works Hegel was compelled to change this position for the speculative endeavor into an end in itself, substituting the superrational object that imposed the speculative method, with the method itself. The method, in the speculative endeavor, is coincident with the object, that much is true. But the finality of the subject engaged in this adventure is not actualized in the same way when it reaches the very scope or object of the endeavor, or if one engages only into the path or

proceeding towards the same object. If the method immediately gives the object, the subject should change his or her behavior. Or else he or she will continue to act inside the premises of the method regardless whether they reached the object or not. In fact, when the object has already been reached, continuing to manifest the speculative method as a critical prevention mode against their own limitation implies that the object has not been effectively reached and that the speculative analysis should continue, never mind the fact that the object has already been manifested in the method and we should concentrate, then, on the object itself since it would always compel us to use at least the speculative in our interaction with it. Instead, at every turn of the exposition the speculative method resumes the same common places of denouncing and speculatively deconstructing the formal thought's confusions in order to transcend them, as if once wouldn't have been enough.

In other words, the speculative, once that it would have attained its own accomplishment of transcending the common mistakes of the formal thinking, would treat its acquired results as already embedded in the philosophical and soteriological attitude and it would change its method into that of theological dogmatics.

However, in the **Doctrine of the Concept** Hegel explains that what we treated here as the Originary is to be thought of as the final revelation of concept in itself, as the final identity of any substance of itself, or, better said, the inner necessity of posited identity that is *freedom* or *identity of the concept*:

> The unity of substance is its relation of necessity. But this unity is thus only inner necessity. By positing itself through the moment of absolute negativity, it becomes manifested or posited identity, and also, therefore, the freedom which is the identity of the concept. This concept, the totality resulting from the relation of reciprocity, is the unity of the two substances that stand in that relation, but in such a way now that the two belong

> to freedom: they no longer possess their identity blindly, that is to say, internally; on the contrary, the substances now explicitly have the determination that they are essentially reflective shine or moments of reflection…

> In the *concept*, therefore, the kingdom of *freedom* is disclosed. The concept is free because the *identity that exists in and for itself* and constitutes the necessity of substance exists at the same time as sublated or as *positedness*, and this positedness, as self-referring, is that very identity. Vanished is the obscurity which the causally related substances have for each other, for the originariness of their self-subsistence that makes them causes has passed over into positedness and has thereby become self-transparently *clear*; the "*originary fact*" is "originary" because it is a "*self-causing fact,*" and this is the *substance that has been let go freely into the concept*. (Hegel, 2010 [1832], pp. 512-513)

With this, Hegelianism had also given a definite response to any posterior objection concerning the issue of freedom and origin. The expression "originary fact" in the Hegelian text corresponds to the German expression "*die ursprüngliche Sache*". As George di Giovanni mentions in the page's footnotes, "cause" in German is the word *Ursache*, and as the prefix "*ur-*" signifies "originariness" which is the English term used by Giovanni for the German *Ursprünglichkeit*. Thus, Hegel's preemptive response to the Heideggerian later objection is, in fact, that Origin opens itself up as the inner necessity of absolutely posited and reflected negativity which reveals itself as identity and as freedom.

We should see, then, this originary openness of the Origin within the developments that Hegel exhibits in the **Identity** section of the **Determinations of reflection**.

First, we see reiterated the subject of the speculative movement that we were acquainted with in the **Preface** of the *Phenomenology…*: once

posited, determinities are passing as categories one into the other. (Hegel, 2010 [1832], p. 355) This unity between the movement of the subject and that of the categories of thought is the immediate effect of their identity because the subject is himself concept as consummation of substance (Hegel, 2010 [1832], p. 511) and the subject relation to himself and to the determinations of his thought is nothing less than identity itself, identity of Being and Essence, of Substance and Reflection: the subject is the concept and his categories are the concepts that are obtained as relations of the subject to himself. (Vetö, 2000, pp. 49, 53)

But any determination of thought encounters its own opposite; identity is no exception. But, then, the immediate passing into its opposite should touch with the sublation of identity which should no longer be formal.

In what follows in his exposition about identity as essentiality, Hegel shows that identity is reflection produced by sublated immediacy of Essence (Hegel, 2010 [1832], p. 356); coming through this transfigured negativity of the suppression and conservation of immediacy it becomes equal to itself as self-identity, thus essential identity. But that means that the identity here obtained as the reflected Essence is Essence in itself as simple negativity:

> Essence is simple immediacy as sublated immediacy. Its negativity is its being; it is equal to itself in its absolute negativity by virtue of which otherness and reference to other have as such simply disappeared into pure self-equality. Essence is therefore simple self-*identity*. (Hegel, 2010 [1832], p. 356)

This identity, then, is the entire Reflection, the entire Essence and it is instituted by the distinguishing offered by a non-being that is not exterior to itself, but it is its own self as non-being or as the negative of itself. A non-being that is entirely engulfed within the essence of its own reflection and which makes Reflection be: thus, it is "self-referring", "reflected difference", and that is *absolute difference*. (Hegel, 2010 [1832], p. 357) But as Hegel

has already shown, the absolute difference manifests itself as identity once sublated. From this, it is evident that the essential identity of Essence is nothing less than the *ontological Difference*.

Further on, identity occurs into *Dasein* and, as such, it is one sided identity or partial identity that is considered to be mere tautology. (Hegel, 2010 [1832], pp. 357-358) This is the internal moment of the essential identity, a moment of exclusive opposition to non-identity. This moment of identity that is given only as a moment of itself, Hegel says, is a "*determination* of simple self-equality over against absolute difference". (Hegel, 2010 [1832], p. 358) But then it becomes obvious to us that such a determination is nothing less than the determined identity of *Dasein reflected in the ontological Difference*.

The effectivity of the essential identity is, then, exposed in its relation to it being considered as a law of thinking. In this, the speculative irreducibility of the superposition of identity and difference, of unity and manifoldness is obvious. Hence, we may see that identity cannot be defined exclusively as tautological anymore since any definition of identity entails separation and differentiation against difference itself and this becomes even more evident when identity is put in relation with concrete experience where it is lived in the concreteness of the manifold, thus, the undifferentiated is immediately differentiated. (Hegel, 2010 [1832], pp. 358-359; Soual, 2000, pp. 167-176)

The relation to tautology becomes a war of identity with itself: the more tautological an identity searches to be, the more contradictory is with itself: the mere repetition of the same notion in order to establish its fixed substantiality gives us *nothing* while we expected *something*. But in this abstract result we fall in deep contradiction: the concreteness is obliterated in abstractedness; abstractedness of identity gives us not the openness of Being, but the void of nothing; the activity of tautology brings upon the happening of the nothing; and all these results opposing the affirmative of

identity contradict the continuity of tautology by the contradiction itself because the occurrence of contradiction in tautology is itself a contradiction. (Hegel, 2010 [1832], pp. 359-360)

The same ineffective results are obtained when the discussion passes to the concept of contradiction: trying to hold on to mere identity excludes the difference, the negative; but this is the restoration of the difference or of the negative by the very gesture that claims to... eliminate them... (Hegel, 2010 [1832], p. 360)

Wherever the pretence of tautology is risen the opposing result ensues. And the principle of thought brings upon nothing more than its installation as logical rule as sublated result of the unity with its opposite. As such, essential identity regarded as rule of thought emerges as the negative of the negative. In this it becomes evident, Hegel shows, that the principles of reason are not originary analytic, but originary synthetic: they continually imply something external or strange towards them that is, in fact, completely internal within their own essence. (Hegel, 2010 [1832], p. 360) Thus, the final result imposes once more with clarity: essential identity as such, as determination of reflection, does not entail or reflect the purely and pristine sameness, but it is only a passage to absolute difference. In other words, the essential reflected identity has one fundamental attribute: *reflecting the ontological Difference*.

VI. Speculative Essence
as Being's Identity in absolute reflection

Ineffable Immediacy: Identity of Being and Essence

If Hegel's Essence is that which has immediately passed (*Das Wesen ist Gewesen*), then the essence is the truth of Being as Being already dead and passed, therefore immediately remnant. The essence is the absolute passage of Being in Nothing and of Nothing in Being; but Nothing and Being are the same, therefore we speak of the absolute passing of Being in itself and of the absolute passing of Nothing in itself. Because passage is immediately given, then immediacy is the truth of the passing—immediacy is absolute passing. Thus, Essence is absolute immediacy as absolute passing into itself and beyond itself. But passing has here two meanings, both recognized by Hegel, the first, explicitly; the second implicitly. The first meaning of passing is **Werden**, *Becoming*. Absolute and originary *Becoming* is the passing from indeterminate and immediate to determinate and mediated, in order to turn the determined and mediated towards the effective infinity of the Idea (Souche-Dagues, 1986, p. 51; Schlitt, 2012 [1984], p. 19). The second meaning is the absolute remanence of the absolute Unspoken as absolute frame of the passing. As Hegel says, and, considering its crucial importance, hereby we feel obliged to offer this quote a second time:

> So the whole true result that we have here before us is *becoming*, but a becoming which is not the merely one-sided or abstract unity of being and nothing. It consists rather in this movement, that pure being is immediate and simple and for that very reason is just as much pure nothing; that the distinction between them *is*, but equally *sublates itself* and *is not*. This

result does also assert, therefore, the distinction of being and nothing, but it asserts it as one which is merely *intended*.

The *ordinary assumption* is that being is the absolutely other of nothing, and that there is nothing as clear as this absolute distinction; indeed, nothing seems easier than being able to state it. But it is just as easy to convince oneself that this is impossible, that the distinction is *unsayable*. *Let those who insist on the distinction of being and nothing, let them just try to state in what the distinction consists*. If being and nothing had any determinateness differentiating them, then, as we said, they would be determinate being and determinate nothing, not the pure being and the pure nothing which they still are at this point. Their distinction is therefore completely empty, each is as indeterminate as the other; the distinction depends, therefore, not on them but on a third element, on *intention*. But intention is a form of subjectivity, and subjectivity does not belong to the present order of exposition. The third element in which being and nothing have their subsistence must however also be present here; and it is present indeed, it is *becoming*. In becoming, they are present as distinct; becoming only occurs to the extent that they are distinguished. This third is an other than they—they subsist only in an other, which is equivalent to saying that they do not subsist on their own. Becoming equally is the subsistence of being and of non-being; or their subsistence is only their being in a *one*; precisely this, their subsistence in a *one*, is that which equally sublates their distinction.

The challenge to produce the distinction between being and nothing also brings with it the challenge to state what, then, is *being*, and *what is nothing*. Those who resist acknowledging that the two are equally only a *transition* of the one into the other, and who assert this or that about being and nothing, let them declare *whereof* they speak, that is, let them advance *a*

> *definition* of being and nothing, and let them demonstrate that
> it is correct. (Hegel, 2010 [1832], p. 68)

It is evident, then, that Being and Nothing are immediately identical in their *unsayable* Origin, and that this immediacy is itself its own self-differentiation and sublation of itself as pure and absolute distinction of Being and Nothing (for opinion to the contrary, *see* Biard, et al., 1981, p. 47). But this absolute and pure distinction of Being and Nothing is their absolute vanishing as isolated subsistences in their reciprocal immediate sublation as identical-differentiated instances of Becoming.

Moreover, Hegel insists on criticizing the use of the concept of "unity" for describing the state of identity between immediate Being and Nothing (Hegel, 2010 [1832], pp. 67-68). As he correctly remarks, the concept of unity already supposes the elements that it concerns as separated, and therefore indifferent to the proper concept of unity. Thus, it already engages in the idea of mediation and cannot account for the absolute immediacy that is hereby searched as pure and originary unbegun beginning.

It is noticeable, however, that when he determines that the absolute and first mediated result of the immediacy of Being and Nothing is Becoming, he names this instantiation as "unity":

> The unity, whose moments, being and nothing, are insepa-
> rable, is at the same time different from these moments. It thus
> stands as a third with respect to them—a third which, in its
> most proper form, is becoming. (Hegel, 2010 [1832], p. 69)

Thus, we can surely identify within Hegel's movement concerning the Immediate beginning two fundamental instantiations in respect to the identity of Being and Nothing.

The first concerns the very origin of this immediacy, or, if we wish, the immediacy of immediacy itself. This moment is only briefly considered by Hegel only in order to be immediately put aside as "unsayable" or

"ineffable"—this moment is that of the lack of difference between Being and Nothing.

The second concerns the movement of immediacy as immediately mediated within itself and such it reveals as difference between Being and Nothing and, because of the immediate and simultaneous identity of the two, it results as the "third" of Becoming, the unity of Being and Nothing.

But, since Becoming is put as unity, and unity is not the concept of absolute Immediacy, it results that the entire Hegelian speculative movement of absolute beginning in and through Immediacy is founded on the absolute ineffable Immediacy which, as above quoted, is implicitly put aside by Hegel as the immediate point of the self-opening of mediation.

As proof that once Being and Nothing are considered passed each in the other Becoming instantiates as unity and opens the entire movement of the speculative endeavor, we may remind here how determinateness is established when the passing from Being to Existence is made:

> On account of the immediacy with which being and nothing are one in existence, neither oversteps the other; to the extent that existence is existent, to that extent it is non-being; it is determined. Being is not the *universal*, determinateness not the *particular*. Determinateness *has yet to detach itself* from *being*; nor will it ever detach itself from it, since the now underlying truth is the unity of non-being with being; all further determinations will transpire on this basis. But the connection which determinateness now has with being is one of the immediate unity of the two, so that as yet no differentiation between the two is posited. (Hegel, 2010 [1832], pp. 84-85)

With the speculative identity between Being and Nothing and their passing into Becoming, the **Indeterminate Immediacy** is revealed in the work of its efficacy as that which operates the ontological binding's fundamental presentification between the instantiations of the elements of

multiplicity. This binding is immediately given such as, to repeat Hegel's words: "the now underlying truth is the unity of non-being with being; all further determinations will transpire on this basis" (Hegel, 2010 [1832], p. 85). Precisely because the absolute immediately passing of the **Indeterminate Immediacy** as Being, as Nothing and as Being and Nothing or Becoming, the ontological difference between the *One* and the *Other* is posited as real distinction between any element and its other or opposite, but also as absolute passage between indeterminacy and determinateness, being and existence, between quality and quantity, between one and many, between being and essence etc.. The entire Hegelian speculative edifice rests upon it. (Ahlers, 1975, p. 270)—That is the reason why Hegel expressly utters that, in relation to Being, determinateness has yet to detach itself from it; however, Hegel quickly specifies that "nor will it ever detach itself from it" (Hegel, 2010 [1832], p. 85). This impossibility is definitive and ontologically fundamental "since the now underlying truth is the unity of non-being with being": meaning that **Indeterminate Immediacy** is already tacitly absolutely unbegun given and established as the ultimate spring of the ultimately sealed immediacy that gives itself as the identity of self-passing within and above the absolute puncture of this immediately unbegun given. And, as effective element in the speculative reflection of the Essence, it is given as the essential identity that reflects the ontological Difference and passes into it. This reflection is the entire movement of the speculative method and its fruits are immediately exposed as elements that have been transfigured through *Aufhebung*, the pure activity of the concept that opens *Dasein* to its own freedom. (Hyppolite, 1946 II, p. 521; Ahlers, 1975, p. 269)

Hegel's freedom

The great departure of Hegel's ontology is the passage from substance, to subject. (Hegel, 1970 [1807] W3, pp. 22-23; Hegel, 2018 [1807], p. 12) Exposed by Hegel through speculative reason it reveals the Absolute as

self-determining, self-positing and self-explaining Real. (Hegel, 1970 [1807] W3, pp. 24-25; Hegel, 1969 [1832] W6, II, pp. 190, 549; Hegel, 2018 [1807], p. 14; Hegel, 2010 [1832], pp. 468, 735) The final achievement of this passage to subject is the absolute revelation of the Absolute Idea, a speculative revelation which goes beyond the partition between subjectivity and objectivity (Biard, et al., 1981, p. 9) and posits them at the climax of the development of all the stages that the speculative endeavor has consummated.

However, before dealing with the final revelation of the Absolute Idea, subjectivity itself had to be found in the objectivity section, (Hegel, 1969 [1832] W6, II, pp. 439-440; Hegel, 2010 [1832], pp. 653-654) where teleology expresses itself as the culmination of the self-determining concept and as freedom of knowing and of reality. The Idea is the unity between concept and objectivity in their absolute separation and it is the effectivity of the realized purpose and as self-revelation of the mystery (μυστήριον) of the speculative: the Trinity. (Hegel, 1969 [1832] W6, II, pp. 451-461; Hegel, 2010 [1832], pp. 662-669; Hegel, 1895, III, pp. 1-2, 7-8, 11, 14-15, 17-22) As such, it expresses the highest degree of freedom that knowledge can assume. But freedom is achieved when the necessity is interiorized and thus it opens the way to the purposiveness of true teleology. Otherwise, the mechanic thinking distinguishes itself as organized only around the principle of external purposiveness. (Hegel, 2010 [1832], pp. 653-654) Or, as Heidegger puts it:

> Even more, obligation and being governed by law, in them-
> selves, presuppose freedom as the basis for their own possibility.
> Only what exists as a free being could be at all bound by an
> obligatory lawfulness. Freedom alone can be the source of obli-
> gation. *A basic problem of logic, the lawgovernedness of thinking,*
> *reveals itself to be a problem of human existence in its ground, the*
> *problem of freedom.* [...] This question about being-in-the-truth
> leads us back to the problem of Dasein's transcendence. And
> insofar as the truth of thinking is codetermined by lawfulness,

the problem of truth is conjoined with the problem of law-fulness and, that means, with the problem of freedom. (Heidegger, 1984 [1978], pp. 19-20)

Teleology and absolute necessity

Teleology is expressed as the reflected or interior necessity of a purposiveness (internal purposiveness) a concept that, as Hegel says, is due to the Kantian effort of distinguishing between the exterior necessity and the interior one. (Hegel, 1969 [1832] W6, II, p. 440 & sqq.; Hegel, 2010 [1832], p. 654 & sqq.; Vetö, 1998, pp. 82-85) But the concept of necessity is explained by Hegel in the *Science of Logic* in the second book, Essence, second part of the third section, Actuality, respectively, (Hegel, 1969 [1832] W6, II, pp. 186-237; Hegel, 2010 [1832], pp. 465-505) and is found to be determined first as *relative necessity* on one hand—which is only the coincidence between formal reality and possibility and, as other authors have emphasized, (Mabille, 1999, p. 215) must not be confounded with hypothetical and exterior necessity since the hypothetical one is only a condition and the external one, it is only a chain of causes and events that has no reflection within; and as *absolute necessity*, on the other hand which is the absolute *coincidence between necessity and contingence* as an act of *freedom*. In this point, Hegel makes very explicit remarks that clarify the absolute coincidence of Being and Essence in the absolute necessity, remarks that remind at the same time the ontological argument of the old metaphysics and the first phase of the speculative logic, that of the poorest and most immediate experience, that of sense certainty:

> Absolute necessity is therefore the truth in which actuality and possibility in general as well as formal and real necessity return.—As we have just seen, it is being which in its negation, in essence, refers itself to itself and is being. It is equally simple immediacy or *pure being* and simple immanent reflection or *pure essence*; it is this, that the two are one and the same.—The

absolutely necessary only is because it is; it otherwise has neither condition nor ground.—But it equally is *pure essence*, its *being* the simple immanent reflection; it is *because* it is. As reflection, it has a ground and a condition but has only *itself* for this ground and condition. It is in-itself, but its in-itself is its immediacy, its possibility is its actuality.—*It is, therefore, because it is*; as the *rejoining* of being with itself, it is essence; but because this simple is equally immediate simplicity, it is *being*.

Absolute necessity is thus the *reflection or form of the absolute*, the unity of being and essence, simple immediacy which is absolute negativity. (Hegel, 2010 [1832], p. 487)

However, absolute necessity is *blind*, Hegel says, because it has a manifoldness of a differentiated actuality where this actuality is given as differences that subsist "over against each other" and where possibility and actuality are identical, which means that we have here an actual infinite that is opaque and rigidly fixated within its own reflection. (Mabille, 1999, p. 225)

In this stiffness, the absolute necessity finally shows itself as being the substance of the absolute's own exposition. And this substance has emerged as the final revelation of the coincidence between being and essence, reflection and shining, negative self-references and collapse into otherness, externality and inwardness, actual and possible, being and nothing, contingency and absolute necessity; which result through the opening of the reflectionless immediacy of absolute necessity's actualities. This is another illustrative fragment in Hegel's work where we can find the tacit presence of what we think is the primordial principle of his thinking: the absolutely indeterminate Immediacy (*unbestimmten Unmittelbarkeit*) which is the pure and absolute Being that makes the departure of the whole Hegelian logic. (Hegel, 1969 [1832] W5, I, pp. 82-83; Hegel, 2010 [1832], pp. 59-60)

What does Hegel understand by indeterminate Immediacy in this occurrence? Judging from its treatment in the beginning of the *Science of*

Logic, he posits indetermined Immediacy as the frame of pure unbegun lack of content and of pure determinateness (*Bestimmtheit*) where pure Being is to be found in order for it to immediately pass into Nothing. (Hegel, 1969 [1832] W5, I, pp. 82-83; Hegel, 2010 [1832], pp. 59-60) However, an attentive reading of the passages regarding speculative passing over of Being in Nothing and of Nothing into Being reveals an interesting perspective about the implications of indeterminate Immediacy in the matter of freedom, about which we shall further make a few considerations.

The opening of contingency

But let us make a few more steps in the direction of trying to clarify what organizes the exposition of absolute necessity and of substance.

Just as all determinations that are developed later, necessity is itself dependent on two anterior moments from the Essence part of the work where reflection and ground are instituted. "Absolute necessity is not so much the necessary, even less a necessary, but necessity—being simply as reflection" says Hegel in his greater *Logic* (Hegel, 1969 [1832] W6, II, p. 217; Hegel, 2010 [1832], p. 489) Also, the moments of absolute necessity, besides that they are the whole totality of necessity, subsisting absolutely, are marked by the situation that they are also "one subsistence", while their differences would only be "reflective shine of the movement of exposition", says Hegel. In order to finish the phrase with the sentence: "...and this reflective shine is the absolute itself". Only to continue immediately following:

> —Essence as such is reflection or a shining; as absolute relation, however, essence is the reflective shine posited as reflective shine, one which, as such self-referring, is absolute actuality.—The absolute, first expounded by external reflection, as absolute form or as necessity now expounds itself; this self-exposition is its self-positing, and is only this self-positing.— (Hegel, 2010 [1832], p. 489)

This is indeed the reappraisal of Essence in its decisive moment of manifestation, but it happens at the end of a journey that the self-exposing of the Absolute has accomplished in its beginning from Reflection, up to Actuality. This passage is necessary in order to bring the inwardness of Essence to the life of effectiveness and this is the means that opens the essential into coming in unity with the unessential or to the principle to reveal itself in its occurrence: thus, contingency is absolutely necessary as Hegel shows. (Hegel, 1969 [1832] W6, II, pp. 213-217, 276-277; Hegel, 2010 [1832], pp. 485-488, 531-532; Mabille, 1999, pp. 183-211, 222-225; Soual, 2000, pp. 82-84) The appearance of contingency within the necessary as necessity's own sublatedness in the negative over against itself is another moment which manifests what we earlier mentioned as the Indetermined Immediacy.

But there are also other occurrences of this seminal concept that tacitly organizes Hegel's thought. When he speaks about possibility, Hegel says:

> The possible is reflected immanent reflectedness; or the identical simply as a moment of the totality, hence also as determined not to be in itself; it therefore has the second determination of being only a possible and the ought-to-be of the totality of form. *Without this ought-to-be, possibility is essentiality as such*... (our emphasis) (Hegel, 2010 [1832], p. 479)

About contingency, Hegel also says:

> This unity of possibility and actuality is contingency. (Hegel, 2010 [1832], p. 480)

Thus, we could formulate the following inference: Essence's (*Wesen*) reflection is what makes necessity function as the superposition between necessity and contingency; whereas necessity as this unity with its contingency is the basic ingredient of teleology; and teleology is the efficacy (*Wirkung*) of freedom. That is why Hegel explicitly makes the assessment

that freedom, is, in fact, the truth of necessity and the relational mode of the concept. (Hegel, 2010 [1832], p. 509)

We are not the first ones to make this assessment. The late and much regretted Professor Bernard Mabille has expounded this very concept in his seminal work *Hegel. L'épreuve de la contingence*—that matched other developments on this subject by other authors such as John W. Burbidge's *Hegel's Systematic Contingency* (Burbidge, 2007).

Thus, in order to ascertain what would be the steering concept that permeates the Hegelian thought in order to open itself to the fundamental moment of freedom, we thought we should make some brief remarks considering a few passages in the Reflection section and in the Ground section of the Essence part of the *Science of Logic*.

Speculative Essence as the work of Freedom

The premise of Hegelian speculative method is all too well known as a prerequisite in order to make intelligible and truthful any of the movements of the Hegelian enterprise. What is distinct in this endeavor is that the speculative approach is revealed as its own object as a methodology (Burbidge, 2007, p. 101) that becomes itself as the revelation of its own procedure, since speculative procedure reveals the ground that moves it and that is itself the speculative truth in itself. (Opiela, 1983, pp. 35-54) Not only the methodological structure is profoundly reflected in specularity, but the ground of specularity itself does more than simply revealing itself: it is by itself changing through its own unbegun beginning, self passage as *Wesen* and achievement and efficacity (*Wirkung*) of itself through concept. (Soual, 2000, pp. 354-355)

This method that transforms itself into the object of inquiry and which permeates the object itself as a substance of thinking penetrated by the essence of its internal movement revealing the object as the very

method, (Hegel, 1969 [1832] W5, I, pp. 16-17, 35-50; Hegel, 2010 [1832], pp. 9-10, 23-33) is what opens the interiorization and reflection of necessity and facilitates the coming of contingency in its ontological correspondence with shine. Such methodology makes clear that the entire structure of the identity between necessity and contingency is founded in the reflection of Essence and based on this, and that it is able to open the efficacy of the speculative movement in its realization of Actuality.

But the efficacity is the unity between necessity and contingency where one of the most important predicates of contingency is sublated in order to coincide with necessity: that of the externality of it. (Hegel, 1969 [1832] W6, II, pp. 439-445; Hegel, 2010 [1832], pp. 653-659)

However, the externality of contingency's sublation is speculatively grounded by the first movements of the Essence chapter where we find the movement of Shine as a movement of coincidence with Essence itself and the revelation of their mediated reflective identity through the reflective interiorization of Essence which, at its turn, is the sublatedness of Being's determinatedness.

How does interiorization (*Erinnerung*) thus operate? The speculative opposition between Essence and Shine reveals that Shine is, in fact, the occurrence of Essence: Essence is the reflected nothingness of Being, while Shine is its immediate revealing expression or manifestation. (Hegel, 1969 [1832] W6, II, pp. 21-22; Hegel, 2010 [1832], p. 344) That is why Hegel says that the task of the speculative exposition in that point is to demonstrate that the determinations that differentiate Shine from Essence are the deter-minations of Essence itself. (Hegel, 2010 [1832], pp. 343-344)

Through this identification of the Essence's negativity and that of Shine, Hegel reveals the Reflection of the inner world of what XXth century European continental thinking has widely understood as the Symbolic in the Lacanian sense (Lacan, 1966, pp. 11-64; Lacan, 2001, pp. 323-328) or

what the older philosophy had understood as the world of representations or ideas in the Platonic sense. (Cassirer, 1944, pp. 42-43; Cassirer, 1980, pp. 74-76) Reflection is what brings inner movement, self-exhaustion for all the elements that are going to follow in the speculative endeavor. It is what equalizes all that is posited in the development of the system of thinking. On the other side of the *Science of Logic*, in the doctrine of Being, what happens is that the pure manifestation or presence-absence that Being and Nothing entail in their pure factuality is movement of inequality towards an other that culminates as Becoming, as Hegel says. (Hegel, 1969 [1832] W6, II, pp. 22-23; Hegel, 2010 [1832], p. 345)

Thus, on one side, that of the doctrine of Being, we have an intimate pulsation of primary level of movement of outburst towards alterity; while on the other side, that of the doctrine of Essence, we have the consummation of this estrangement of the immediate unbegun void into its own coincidence with the lack of itself—which begins with Reflection and culminates in the absolute necessity that produces the infinite substance as a speculative effect and effectuation of the freedom that makes happen the coincidence of necessity and contingency (Hegel, 1969 [1832] W6, II, pp. 250-251; Hegel, 2010 [1832], pp. 512-514) since

> The *determinateness* of necessity consists in its having its
> negation, contingency, within it. (Hegel, 2010 [1832], p. 485)

This identity between necessity and contingency happens because necessity is that which passes from possibility into actuality and from actuality into possibility through *Aufhebung*, meaning that the passing from one to the other is an ontological transfiguration that is compelled by the exhaustion that necessity brings upon as absolute movement of the absolute negativity in itself.

What is the common source of the two manifestations of the Hegelian position and passing from Being to Essence, and then to Concept? What is

important as a conclusion to the Reflection section of the *Science of Logic* is the institution of the determinations of reflection and their result which is Ground.

The Ground Contradiction

The nature of this ground is to be established since identity is for Hegel apparently only one of the determinations of reflection. As such, Ground is the image-ensemble of the speculative movement. As Hegel says:

> Finite things, in their indifferent variety, are therefore just this: to be contradictory, *internally fractured and bound to return to their ground*. (Hegel, 2010 [1832], p. 385)

Only to add soon after:

> As we shall see in due course, the true inference from the finite and accidental to an absolutely necessary being does not consist in inferring the latter from that finite and accidental as a *being which is and remains the ground of the inference*, but from it as a being which is only "falling" [as *accidentality*, from the Latin *cadere*, immediately conveys], a *being inherently self-contradictory*; or rather, the inference consists in demonstrating that accidental being makes in itself its return to its ground and is there sublated. (*Ibidem*)

But what is the ultimate Ground of reflection? Is there an identity that permeates speculatively beyond essentialities? Speculative identity needs the exhaustion of an absolutely changing immutability. It is itself the immediate self-division of undetermined immediacy. And through this self-division, the substance of being becomes essence, and essence reveals itself as speculative subject. Only then is Freedom absolutely grounded as absolute unity between necessity and contingency, immediate being and reflective concept, world and spirit. And spirit reveals itself as self-positing Absolute in the form of Trinity that, as shown above, is one of the Hegelian fundamental

premises of thinking. (Hegel, 1895, III, pp. 11-17, 32-37; Schlitt, 2012 [1984], pp. 3-23; Brito, 1977, pp. 86-87; Brito, 1979, pp. 36-60, 98-151; Brito, 1983)

There are two frames or horizons within which the freedom issue is to be developed: that of the inner realization of freedom which pertains to the reflective moment and to its ground; and that of the necessity of freedom or its relation to contingency.

Freedom is not abstract, but real, positive and reflective. And most of all, it is effective (*Wirkung*). Hegel's doctrine of Law expresses with precision this, that the subject must be inscribed in the efficacy of his presence as much in his own reflective conscience, as in the fundamental structures of the institutions of his world. (Hegel, 2008, pp. 54-57, 235-256)

The passage from the abstractedness of negative freedom that remains within itself to the positive freedom of the effectiveness of real content could be seen as given by the mediating moment of the Essence: since freedom needs in itself the first moment of differentiation between what is and what must be attained as fundamental prerequisite of its condition of possibility, its second moment is that of the point of departure from which freedom's intent opens its fundamental horizon of self-achievement.

Both these moments, the differentiation and the point of departure are to be found in the concepts of the Determinations of reflection and in that of the Ground which were then developed in the concept of Actuality and of the relation between possible, actual and necessary. As such, as Hegel specifies in several passages, (Hegel, 1969 [1832] W6, II, pp. 246, 250-251; Hegel, 2010 [1832], pp. 509, 512-513) freedom is the truth of necessity.

In the problem of the Ground Hegel touches to the question of efficacy: form and matter are the two fundamental principles that organize the efficacy (*Wirkung*). As expected, matter and form coincide in their originary abstractedness of each other, in their negative positedness and in their self-reference to themselves. And the entire activity of grounding is the playing

between the activity of form and the movement of matter which are the same thing. (Hegel, 1969 [1832] W6, II, pp. 92-93; Hegel, 2010 [1832], p. 395)

Thus:

> ...matter is the ground of its form determination not as matter but only inasmuch as it is the absolute unity of essence and form; similarly, form is the ground of the subsistence of its determinations only to the extent that it is that same one unity. But this one unity, as absolute negativity, and more specifically as exclusive unity, is, in its reflection, a presupposing; or again, that unity is *one* act, of preserving itself as positedness in positing, and of repelling itself from itself; of referring itself to itself as itself and to itself as to another. Or, the act by which matter is determined by form is the self-mediation of essence as ground, in one unity: through itself and through the negation of itself. (Hegel, 1969 [1832] W6, II, p. 93; Hegel, 2010 [1832], pp. 395-396)

The act of "repelling itself from itself" (*sich von sich selbst abzustoßen*) is identical as speculative procedure to the act of repelling itself from itself of the absolute necessity that, as late Professor Bernard Mabille observed, determines itself as contingency and which is the fundamental movement that entails freedom. (Mabille, 1999, p. 222)

Thus, Ground reveals also the appearance of contradiction between freedom and necessity; and that of the synthesis between necessity and contingency as the realization of freedom, thus, of its efficacy.

Indeterminate Immediacy, the unsayable freedom

Since Being is absolute negativity of itself (it is identical with Nothing) and Essence is the negation of the immediate negativity of Being, it becomes evident that this Essence, as truth of Being (*werden Wesen* against *Sein*) is precisely Being or the movement of Being in itself. In fact, Essence is the truth of immediacy.—Immediacy usually has a position of determinateness or

determinacy in Hegel: which is paradoxical since the absolute immediacy of Being and Nothing that he finds to be the beginning of his Logic are absolutely indeterminate. But it is also determinate by being indeterminate as opposed to what is determined.

Freedom is usually seen as possible either by a lack of conditionality, either by a lack of obstacle; but speculatively, it is primordially and ultimately actualized through the fundamental act of repelling of Being as *indeterminate Immediacy* from itself as sublated and reflected Essence, that is, through the singular apparition of contingency which is the declination of Being as Nothing and as Becoming and of Essence as Shine and Reflection in order to produce all the other speculative stages and figures that follow (determinations of reflection, ground, appearance, actuality etc.).

But what is the contingency of the situation of Being and Nothing in their mutual primordial passing over one another? As seen above, in the fragments where Hegel devotes all his efforts to eliminating any possible distinction between Being and Nothing, (Hegel, 2010 [1832], p. 68) he says that the difference between Being and Nothing is "unsayable" (*unsagbar*). (Hegel, 1969 [1832] W5, I, p. 95)

But this "unsayable" dimension is absolutely necessary in order for Being and Nothing to be, nevertheless, different and to begin the speculative movement since without their difference there would be no dual movement, no primary ontological pulsation that would culminate in Becoming. Therefore, their difference is their identity and their identity-difference is what constitutes the effectiveness of opening into Becoming and of instituting the determined being (*Dasein*). Moreover, this identity-difference is what appears at every turn of the speculative endeavor where the ultimate result of all movements and figures is a contradiction that gives a synthetic fertile bearing that opens another dimension in the ontological luxuriousness of the Hegelian narrative.

What would better correspond to this primordial identity-difference in Hegel's system is the *Indeterminate Immediacy's* concept.

Right from the beginning of the doctrine of Being, *Indeterminate Immediacy* is the first non-presupposition that however must always be pre-supposed. And it contains all the significance that can bear the necessary weight speculative thinking supposes. We may recognize it in all the stages of the *Science of Logic* at the turning points of the speculative springs that organize the narrative. *Indeterminate Immediacy* is the fundamental, primary, absolutely sealed and undeveloped coincidence between absolute identity and absolute difference, but also, between absolute Being and absolute Nothing, but not in their positedness that is considered in the *Lehre vom Sein*, at the beginning, where Being and Nothing end up by coinciding in Becoming. (Hegel, 1969 [1832] W5, I, p. 83; Hegel, 2010 [1832], pp. 59-60) Instead, we meet here the absolute immediacy neither of Being, neither of Nothing since this is their absolute anteriority and pure factual positedness that Hegel mentions as "unsagbar", "unsayable": it is the third preceding term of the difference between Being and Nothing and that organizes their mutual positedness and passing over of each one into the other. Yet its precedence is not chronological, but speculative since it coincides with Being and Nothing, a coincidence that is immediate and self-mediated simultaneously. And in the end, Indeterminate Immediacy reveals itself as Concept: in the **Subjective logic** section the concept appears as "truth of substance" which implies necessity as the "determining relational mode of substance" which, at its turn, implies freedom as "truth of necessity and relational mode of the concept". (Hegel, 2010 [1832], p. 509)

Just as much, absolute Indeterminate Immediacy is also the opening culmination of Being in its passing over into Nothing and also the opening culmination of Nothing in its passing over into Being: it is not only what originates Being and Nothing, but it also is what makes their passing over into each other and acquiesce their coincidence as opening themselves into

Becoming as contingency of determinateness. Concerning Becoming, the Indeterminate Immediacy is what makes Becoming come to its own exhaustion (*zerstört sich*) giving way to its completion as determinate being and, as such, as root of contingency. (Hegel, 2010 [1832], p. 81) In Hegel's own words:

> ...Das Werden ist das Verschwinden von Sein in Nichts und von Nichts in Sein und das Verschwinden von Sein und Nichts überhaupt; aber es beruht zugleich auf dem Unterschiede derselben. Es widerspricht sich also in sich selbst, weil es solches in sich vereint, das sich entgegengesetzt ist; eine solche Vereinigung aber zerstört sich. (Hegel, 1969 [1832] W5, I, p. 113)

The unsayable Indeterminate Immediacy is nothing less than freedom itself: it is what opens and what gives actuality and efficacy to all that the speculative journey has to offer in order for the richness of all existence to come to its completion as the true life of the subject.

Conclusion

This work has tried to obtain a fresh perspective upon the central issue of the Hegelian identity concept. In this it seemed a seminal task to reevaluate Hegel's position towards the most important movements in the XXth century concerning the question of Origin. Making a short assessment concerning the relation between Hegel and Heidegger was of immediate interest since Heidegger has been and is considered Hegelian philosophy's Nemesis by the criticism that he employed in the later texts concerning the "onto-theologische Verfassung der Metaphysik" by which Heidegger meant the fundamental tenet of Western metaphysics: the solidarity between logic, ontology and theology that has been derived from the principle of identity and which has carried the entire Western thought before the World Wars to the transcendental principle of conceiving Being as infinite Act of presence (*Anwesenheit*) and this absolute immediacy as the immediate coincidence between One and Many that is the ground of the entirety of existence. In this Heidegger attacked the perceived naivety of the traditional metaphysics that was urgent and expeditive in obtaining its coherence and cohesion even when deeply rooted incoherencies ultimately undermined them. In short, the great argument against the old metaphysical tradition is that it has a difficult relation with the Real of History: the absolute actuality of the old metaphysics is seen as inflexible and incapable to manage the ontological negativity that human history engages in all the deeds, creations and exploits of Man because of its own demise in the issue of the ontological Difference towards Being as fundamental and transcendent principle.

Heidegger thought that Hegel too is to be situated in the same paradigm of the principle of identity's actuality despite the entire Hegelian development of speculative dialectics. The Hegelian speculative system is seen by Heidegger

as nothing more but another method to enforce the old tautology of meta-physical ontology, with the only variation of using negativity as the lever of the system.

In this work we undertook showing that the Hegelian system does not depart from the assumption of a simple tautology and that the negativity that the speculative path entails is not the negativity of old metaphysics.

In fact, the Hegelian speculation employs negativity as the exhaustion of suppression that theological ontology understood as the ontological abyss of unbeing or of non-being. But the Hegelian turn of speculation makes it mandatory that every concept used in the course of its endeavor must be put in the comprehensive totality not only of its meaning, but, as a trans-figuration of the totalization of this meaning, in all the effective consequences that the concept may compel. Grasping the concept of a phenomenon or of a being is not merely finding its accepted language definition, but to grasp one way or the other the very Real of that concept in the economy of existence, the fundamental effectiveness of the entity concerned by its concept.

Of course, as any fundamental exertion, this is a circular engagement: grasping the essential effectiveness of a being or phenomenon requires grasping its concept as its essence; but grasping its concept as its essence requires the adequate grasp of its essential effectiveness. The effectiveness is the ontological ramification and consequence of a being or phenomenon in its reality as relations towards any other being or phenomenon. While the concept is the being-in-itself (*Ansichsein*) of that element, with its unity and inner properties. Thus, the entire knowledge movement of thought departs from its very beginning in the double sense of the inner and outer aspects of the concerned element and it is equally effective or ineffective no matter what would be the main aspect that it would choose to apprehend. But if the inner aspect of any element is the Essence (*Wesen*) or its being as unity, being-in-itself (*Ansichsein*), then its outer aspect and the relations that

are implied towards any other element are the Presence(-to-be) (*Anwesenheit*) of that element or its being-in-and-for-another (*Ansich-Sein-für-Anderes*). Thus, we could rightly see in this double occurrence of the concerned element the double occurrence of identity and difference. The Essence that is past (*Wesen ist gewesen*) or as the own past of the being or of the object: the settled identity of the immediately past concept or of the immediately past thought. And the Presence that is actual, in the now (*Anwesenheit*), but moving in itself as a flux of determinations that reflect the inner immobile immediation of the Essence. In this, as Hegel shows, Essence becomes. It does not remain steadily as just a dead idol of presupposition, but it begets its own unassignable Presence that is impossible to circumscribe to any point of determination of the past-self-revealing-in-the-act of Essence. Identity is the absolute remaining-in-the-absolute-of-passing: its pure evanescence or obsolescence is its own *absolution—Absolvenz* wrote the intuitive Heidegger (Heidegger, 1980, p. 72)—as Another that is the Same. Identity of identity with and in difference is the famous Hegelian formulation that has been pointed out by many others before us, but scarcely analyzed. Identity, then, cannot be a given and is not a mere tautology: instead it is a hetero-tautology, its own core is traversed, trans versed and transfixed by absolute difference.

The comprehension of the Hegelian identity is thus dependent upon the understanding of absolute difference not merely as a speculative logical category, as exposed in the *Science of Logic*, but as some would say, as the "archetype" of difference. There is only one place in the Hegelian speculative enterprise where this archetype is explicitly and carefully exposed: in the opening of the **Doctrine of Being** section of the *Science of Logic*. That is why our main undertaking has finally focused on chiefly commenting that part of the Hegelian work.

After trying to bring some prerequisite clarifications concerning the Heideggerian criticisms towards metaphysics in general and that of Hegel in particular, after showing some of the misconstructions that Heidegger

assumed concerning the Hegelian speculation and the charge of culminative onto-theology, our main analysis opened the issue of the absolute difference that in the Hegelian terminology is given as pure and absolute Nothing. In order to understand identity, one has to grasp the concept of Being that opens up the **Doctrine of Being**; but right at that place one finds that Being is dependently exposed and discussed by Hegel in immediate correlation to the concept of Nothing that is, in fact, presented as being Being itself and in itself, but altogether different from Being in itself and in itself and opening itself to the same terminal exhaustion of the absolute immediacy of which Being is also the subject. Thus, we found that Being and Nothing are the same and only Immediacy, but immediately posited as different in themselves and to one another while Hegel was also insisting that they wouldn't have had any other common transcendent instantiation. But Immediacy in itself is their common transcendent instantiation and this common and transcendent instantiation is also their common-in-different immanence since there is no difference in Immediacy but only the immediate passing of the absolutely immediate Immediacy in itself. Only in the light opened along such a path we could find a meaningful approach to the originary Idea that is pulsating beyond all of the Hegelian speculative movements in general, and that of the exhibition of identity and difference in particular.

Following this path that we tried to expose in the most detailed, but retained manner that we found possible, we arrived at the concept of *Absolute Indeterminate Immediacy*. This is, in fact, Hegel's fundamental and authentic frame of thought: the absolute and immediate suppression of identity of the absolute non-particulateness of the absolutely immediate arrest in the pure vibrationless and extensionless result; and absolute self-differentiation in absolute extensionless self-precedence. This is the absolute non-point, the immutable and ineffable non-fissure through which and in which identity is irreducibly given in the factual impossibility of effective non-reduction—because here reduction is already accomplished exhaustion.

Hereby factual identity is self-differentiated through and within the very absolute antecedence of the immediate exhaustion of "self"-precedence. And hereby factual identity is its own absolute remnantless self-division.

From this **Absolute Immediacy** springs the Hegelian identity and difference and this concept is even more rigorous and more compelling than the Heideggerian "belonging **together**" (**Zusammen***gehören*) or of "**belonging** together" (*Zusammen**gehören***). The frame of the *Zusammengehören* appears rather in the substantive Imaginary and offers reluctantly only suppositions concerning the true nature of identity: it expresses only the coming of togetherness as already separated instantiations of being and it rather leaves in complete mystery the effective, intimate nature of identity in itself.

Of course, this would be the place for the already traditional Heideggerian reproaches against the Hegelian enterprise: that it tries to annex and to employ in a rational project, a sort of *Entwurf*, the mystery of identity and of difference, making use of them as of instruments dedicated to a determined methodology that does not ultimately reveal anything else but the will of power of "das Mann". Instead of *Identity* (*Gleichheit*), Heidegger proposed *Sameness* (*Selbigkeit*) with the view that *Identity* makes difference disappear, while within *Sameness* "difference appears". (Heidegger, 1969 [1957], p. 45; Heidegger, 2006 [1957], p. 55) But, as we've shown, the Sameness implies in Heidegger a vibrating repetition which already supposes or implies a hemorrhagic extension that is ecstatic and already marked by exteriority; whilst originary Identity (we could use the term *Selbigkeit* for it too) means the fullness of the unstirred singularity, an immediacy that alone may open itself to the mystery of originary *Difference*. The solution, we believe, must supersede reason since it must totalize and absolutely immediately surpass it, thus giving an authentic solution to the issue of fundamental *Identity*.

In the Hegelian solution of the absolute identity of identity with its absolute difference we found infinite depth and abysmal openness contrary

to the accusations of reducing Being to *Dasein* and of employing the reason of the subject to appropriate all existence and transform it into the instrument of "das Mann". The more spectacular it was revealed to be since Hegel's Ground has theological and even mystical meaning.

In this respect, we tried to maintain the proper path of Western ancient tradition that has been revealed by Christian dogmatics: the mystery of the Principle is not nebulae, but it is an articulated mystery—one that gives itself covered in the liminary formulations of the dogmatic antinomies. Thus, the continuous parallel that we kept between our speculative analysis and that of Christian dogmatics: in this it became even more evident the structural and conceptual approach and indebtedness of the Hegelian logic to the structural articulation of Christian theology (Yerkes, 1983, pp. 111-114; O'Regan, 1994, p. 88; Vieillard-Baron, 2006, pp. 219-223). Hegel does not speak of mystery in his approach concerning the relation between Being and Nothing. But he speaks of mystery in relation to speculative thought (Hegel, 1895, III, pp. 17-19) and he considers the entire matter in a speculative understanding where speculative reason develops the articulations of the limits of ontology and of ontological thought by assuming the consequences that impose themselves as a result of the revelation of the identity system as an identity of identity with difference, in other words, as a speculative development of Trinitarian theology.

And this is also what Hegel exhibits when he develops the analysis of identity and difference in the **Essence** section of the *Science of Logic* where he shows that the entire principle of identity is already given as a determined category in the formal logic since it claims to withstand in pure tautology, devoid of any form of inner difference. The principle of non-contradiction is itself already supposing the difference towards the difference of the formal identity and it claims to hold in unwavering stillness any term that is posited within its frame. This immediately results in the alterity being ontologically supposed within the very concept of the rejection of alterity.

But the great genius of Hegel is to have discovered that the identity as essentiality or determination of reflection as exposed in the **Essence** section of the *Science of Logic* is the ontological *Difference*. As such, it is the labor of the *Geist*, *Spirit*, as speculative subject to know this ontological *Difference*, to inquire upon its instantiation and upon the reason behind its instantiation. The inquiry pertains, then, to the speculative subject as the *Dasein* of the *Aufhebung*, the *Dasein* that accepts his own *Karfreitag* of the Golgotha in order to gain access to the alchemy of the transfigurative negativity. The transfigurative negativity of the *Aufhebung* is the great reformation of identity that Hegel proposes: although Hegel was not a mystical man (Hyppolite, 1946 II, pp. 506, 512, 524), his fundamental tenet is this metanoia of negativity of which he says is the "blood" of the speculative undertaking, the life of the *Spirit* and that it is in itself nothing else than identity in its absolute immediacy. As such, the theological dimension is the authentic Essence of the entire speculative *Erinnerung* and the originary instantiation of **Absolute Indeterminate Immediacy**, the *unsagbar* absolute identity and difference of Being and Nothing, of the **Doctrine of Being** section is the unnamed, silent spring of the Hegelian identity. The absolute negativity is the *Dasein* revelation of the form that this sealed origin of Hegel furthers as the Ground of the life of speculation. But this absolute negativity is only in-itself; its occurrence for the *Dasein* is the essential identity and its procession is the reflection of this identity in the *Gewissen*, the knowing: the formal principle of identity that results as law of thinking taken as the law of the thinking of Reflection. As such, identity of the ontological *Difference* inscribes its effectivity in the Ground as freedom of *Dasein*, passing through teleology and absolute necessity, contingency, speculative essence, ground contradiction and finally reaching the unsayable freedom.

But the inquiry that *Dasein* has not only the right, but the freedom and, as such, the symbolic duty to employ in order to find the true identity of being has to be engaged through the means of the speculative and its

fundamental instrument which is the *Aufhebung*. Only through its own negativity suppressed, conserved and transfigured into the affirmative essence of the *Spirit* is *Dasein* able to become the subject of his own endeavor, of the absolute knowing where, finally, substance and the I coincide in their very transfigured negativity of essence.

Hence, we tried to suggest that the Hegelian enterprise might seem or be seen as a soteriology of sorts which develops itself into a theological horizon even against the non-mystical stance of Hegel himself, but taking into account the decidedly mystical profile and implications of most of his speculative conceptual structures. For the same reason we adventured ourselves into the exposition of notorious fragments of Hegel's works from the perspective that would ascertain the exposition of an ontological argument. As such, the results that crowned our investigations in what concerns the issue of Being, Nothing, Ground, Identity, Difference, Immediacy and Mediation have been exposed also as an argument against the objection of onto-theology that the Heideggerian tradition has raised against Western metaphysics in general and against Hegel in particular. As our work hereby exposed strongly indicates, we believe, Hegel is no more susceptible to assume blame for such an accusation then any other thinker that belongs to the pantheon of Western metaphysics; and, even more so, he is no more guilty of such indictment then Heidegger himself.

Contrary to what Heidegger believed, Hegel's *unsagbar* **Absolute Indeterminate Immediacy** is precisely the *Ungedachten* that Heidegger was calling as the heraldic concept of the new way of philosophizing. This principle is even more effective than Heidegger's *Selbigkeit* of the *Zusammengehörigkeit* that, after the *Kehre*, opened the *Anwesenheit* of the new *Ge-stell* of Man and Being as relation to technology. And it is the authentic Origin that differentiates *Dasein* in the horizon of absolute *Being* as fundamental grounding of the relation to the Abyss. The *Spirit* is and always will be greater than any *Ge-stell* and will dwell within the true depth of *Being*, if compared to the *Ge-stell* of

technology. The *Spirit* evokes and actualizes the true Life of Being because it holds on to the seriousness of passion, suffering and death, the Real of the Negative that reveals the truth and the effectiveness of the plenitude, the richness of its transcending presence, a Negative that must be vanquished only through the assuming of it in order to open the light of the true and absolute knowing of the fundamental concept which resides in *Dasein* and relinquishes him in his freedom.

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